

CHIPPEWA
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
SWCD
Established in 1954

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2015 ANNUAL REPORT

*The purpose of the Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District is to control soil erosion and improve water quality.
The primary goal of the District is to take available technical, financial and educational resources,
whatever their source, and focus on coordinating them so that they meet the needs of the local land user.*



Example of unbuffered river bank.

Buffer Legislation and Chippewa SWCD's role in buffer compliance

If you have not already heard the news, Governor Mark Dayton's new water quality and habitat driven buffer initiative was recently signed into law, designating roughly 110,000 acres of land for water quality buffer strips statewide. Each local SWCD office plays a major role in working with landowners to assist in installation of those buffer strips. The law was designed to establish new, perennial vegetative buffers averaging 50 feet along protected rivers, streams and wetlands, and a minimum of 16.5 feet along public ditches and other locally identified waters that will help filter out phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediment.

The new law provides some flexibility for landowners to install and maintain buffers, and enhance compliance with the buffer law across the state. Buffers need to be installed on protected waters by November of 2017. Public drainage systems need to be buffered by November 2018, according to the legislation. This gives landowners a little time to figure out what route they want to go. Landowners

have the option to install a buffer that meets or exceeds the minimum requirements on their own, or they have the option to utilize other conservation programs such as CRP, which will provide cost share to install and maintain a buffer throughout the life of the CRP contract. The sooner landowners stop in the SWCD office to discuss their options, the longer they have to think about what they are going to do. What hasn't been discussed in too much detail is that there are "alternative practices" to a buffer. The Board of Water and Soil Resources hasn't refined those enough for SWCDs to promote yet. In most instances, a buffer will be the smoothest, less complicated and most economical way to get into compliance.

Currently, the Department of Natural Resources is putting together maps of all protected/public waters and county ditches for SWCDs to use when conducting buffer inventory procedures. Chippewa SWCD has access to previous protected waters maps as well as

county ditch maps, therefore, the buffer compliance inventory process has already begun in Chippewa County. The official buffer maps are set to be finished in July of 2016.

Chippewa SWCD is here to assist landowners with the new buffer initiative. Stop by the office or give us a call to discuss your buffer status and, if necessary, start the establishment plan for your buffer(s). There are programs available that will pay you to establish and keep buffers (e.g. CRP, RIM, CREP) as well as keep you in compliance with the new law. Chippewa SWCD sells native and cool season grass mixes and the district can also assist landowners by planting their buffers with a recently acquired grass drill (see page 6 about seed and seeding services). Landowners with questions or concerns can stop by the office located in the Chippewa County Courthouse or give us a call at 320-269-2139, ext.3.

For more information about the new buffer law, please visit: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/buffers/index.html> or <http://bwsr.state.mn.us/buffers/>

Chairman's Report

Steve Sunderland
CHAIRMAN

In 2015, the SWCDs and the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation District (MASWCD) talked to the legislature about the importance of reliable funding for SWCDs. We successfully obtained Local Capacity Funding for two years through the Clean Water Funds, after which funding should be part of the general fund. Minnesota Legislature also passed the Buffer Law, bringing change to local SWCDs, who will administer the new law.

Meanwhile the SWCD continued to participate in our traditional outreach activities. The 5th graders took part in the poster contest "Local Heroes: Your Hardworking Pollinators," with classroom visits and field days in May. The winners of the poster contest were: Bethany Bratsch, Keihly Gallinger, Emily Santjer, and Ella Bourne. Congratulations to all the winners!

This year, we worked with the Montevideo 6th graders as a part of the "Kids in the Community Program." We cleaned out trash and rubble from several areas in town, including the pond by

Walmart, the grove between Coborn's and Luther Haven as well as the storm water retention ponds in the ditch along that service road, and along the wetland behind Schwieter's Ford, Subway, and Grandstay Suites. We also had one group work in the rain garden at the Chippewa County Courthouse, while another cleaned out the grove behind the old Thrifty White building. Several hundred pounds of trash were collected by the students by the time they finished. The Montevideo city maintenance crew kindly picked up the collected trash.

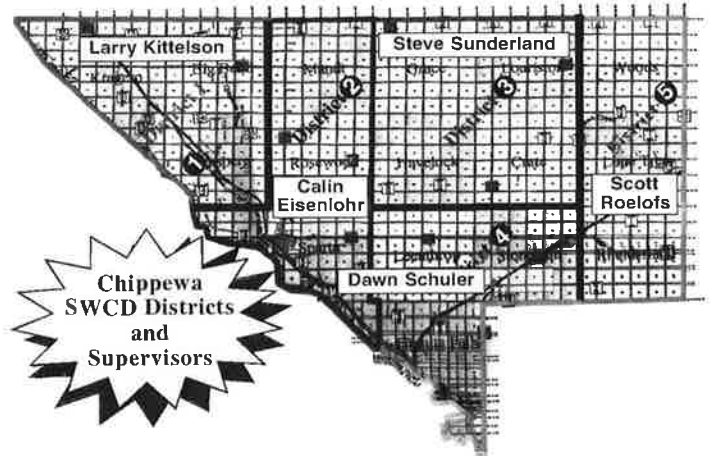
This year's Women's Field Day was held at Memorial Park near Granite Falls. Bernard Sietman gave a presentation on mussels and their importance in the river systems.

The Chippewa SWCD purchased a Truax seed drill this year to utilize as an SWCD service. Zach is looking forward to fully implementing this service.

I would like to thank the rest of the Board and the Staff for their hard work in continuing to protect our natural resources in Chippewa County. The SWCD looks forward to continuing to support our community in 2016.



Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District 2015 Board of Supervisors (front, from left) Calin Eisenlohr, Dawn Schuler, (back) Steve Sunderland, Larry Kittelson and Scott Roelofs.



Conservation Corner

Complete the crossword below

Across

1. Planted to reduce erosion throughout the winter and to increase soil health
2. Deep rooted perennial vegetation
3. Protects farmsteads from wind
5. Required along all public waters and county ditches
8. A channel that conveys water
9. Vegetative cover along a water body that filters water, sediment, & nutrients
10. What we find in lakes, rivers and streams after erosion has occurred
12. Bees & butterflies are these
13. Structural practice following a contour that reduces in field erosion
14. The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism
15. Prevents wind erosion in crop fields
16. Recharges ground water and provides wildlife habitat

Down

1. Permanently protected habitat
4. Planted in farmstead shelterbelts and field windbreaks
6. Usually caused by wind, water, or other natural/manmade causes
7. Local office for conservation services and programs
11. Financial assistance for qualifying programs and practices
17. Federal office for conservation services and programs

Created on TheTemptations.com using CrosswordMakers.com

CoverCrops SWCD Sediment ConservationEasement Buffer CostShare Windbreak
Terrace Wetland Erosion Filterstrip Waterway Trees Shelterbelt Pollinators

NativeGrass Habitat NRCS

NRCS welcomes Brentt Fease

Brentt Fease recently started working in the USDA Service Center for Ullima, which does con- **Brentt Fease** tracted administrative work for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Some of the areas Brentt will be assisting in will be writing letters, filing, assisting walk in customers, writing publications and assisting with outreach. Brentt grew up in Mahtomedi, MN, near the Twin Cities, and earned his Bachelor's degree at UW River Falls.



SWCD District Staff

SWCD 2015 staff (from left) Tom Warner – SWCD District Manager, Zach Bothun – SWCD Technician and Desirae Sharp – SWCD Administrative Assistant.



NRCS Staff

Brentt Fease – Contracted through Ultima for NRCS, Mike Timmerman – NRCS Soil Conservation Technician and Shantel Lozinski – NRCS District Conservationist.

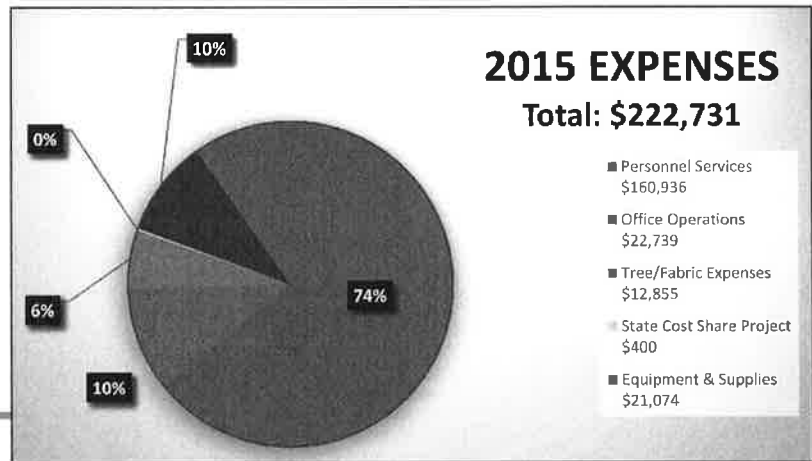
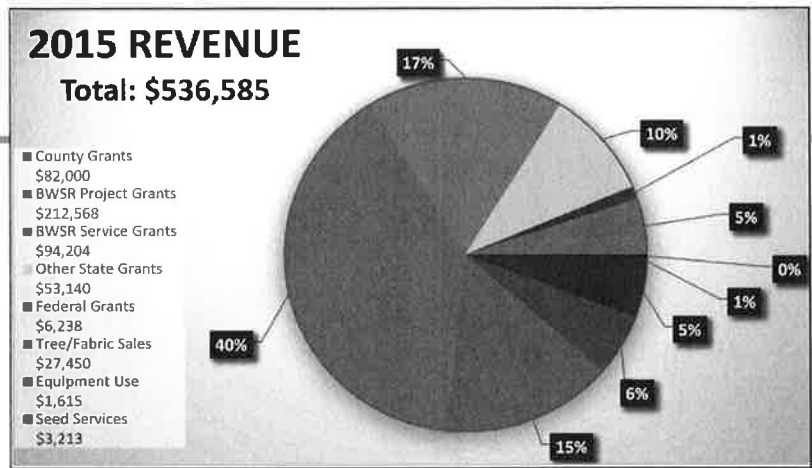
SWCD 2015 State Cost-Share Program Funding	
Well Sealing	totaling 400.00
NRCS 2015 Program Funding	
Payments made on 48EQIP/CSP contracts	totaling more than \$1,287,000 <small>(Information is unofficial)</small>

CHIPPEWA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Statement of Revenues, Expenditure and Changes in Fund Balances

Budget & Actual General Fund

for the Year Ended DECEMBER 31, 2015



\$313,854 NET REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

Chippewa County Rain Gauge Report



Chippewa County Rain Gauge Report

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
1. Kristie Erickson				0.85	7.99	3.5	5.61	4.46	0.91				23.32
2. Dan Benson					4.01	4.46	3.58	4.99		1.27	1.88		20.19
3. Vince Smith	0.43	0.24	0.25	0.51	7.8	2.28	5	4.73		1.71	2.06	0.74	25.75
4. Wayne Golden					5.41	4.01	5.35						14.77
5. Jim Crowley					4.07	4.06	4.34	3.96	0.94	1.3	2.22		20.89
6. Marvin Timmons				0.35	4.8	4.2	3.08		1.72	1.58			15.73

Having trouble with your Septic System? Low Interest Loans and Grant Opportunities Available to Upgrade your Septic System in Chippewa County

3% Low Interest Loans are available to Farmers and Rural Landowners in Chippewa County for Upgrading Existing Septic Systems to IMPROVE WATER QUALITY for a better tomorrow.

\$ Grants up to \$5,000 available for eligible **low-income** residents. Call for more details and income guidelines.

For criteria and eligibility guidelines, please contact the Chippewa County Land & Resource Management Office at 320-269-6231.



Chippewa County Local Water Plan... Locally driven programs to protect your soil & water resources!

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

2015 NRCS Report

By **Shantel Lozinski**
USDA-NRCS

The last year has been a busy one with growing interest in Farm Bill programs, program signups, and conservation plan writing. 2015 allowed many outreach opportunities including 5th grade field days and the 2015 Women's field day was also a huge success with over 31 women landowners attending and learning about native muscels in the Minnesota River. Bernard Sietman, Malacologist with the DNR was our guest speaker.

With the recent change in rain patterns, where several inches of rain at a time became common, we saw a flush of potential erosion control projects. We continue to have interest in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) for long term



structures being placed on the landscape. A few of the projects this year included a grade stabilization structure and two water and sediment control basins. These will provide a long term solution for the erosion issues that were occurring. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) plans were written during most of the summer and fall, it was nice to see the amount of CRP filter strips that were re-enrolled this year as well and new land that is maybe on the lower end for crop production. 2016 will include more expiring contracts in which hopefully operators will be looking to re-enroll, especially the more sensitive areas such as filter strips and hydric soil areas.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) continued to gain momentum in the county this year with new contracts and re-enrollment opportunities. This program allows landowners/operators that are currently at a good level of management to continue good stewardship practices as well as take on new to the operation enhancements. This program is great if you're thinking of taking the next step to increase management on your operated acres but need a little incentive.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

By **Shantel Lozinski**
USDA-NRCS

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary conservation program that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by undertaking additional conservation activities. Through CSP, NRCS will provide financial assistance to eligible producers to conserve and enhance soil, water, air and related natural resources on their land. The entire agriculture operation must be enrolled and must include all agriculture land that will be under the applicants control for the term of the proposed contract. Is CSP right for you? Are you willing to commit time to inventory and document your conservation activities and production system to determine eligibility and ranking? Do you have records of your farming activities and are you willing to continue maintaining records? Are you ready to enter into a five-year contract requiring you to apply additional conservation activities

and improve, maintain, and manage existing conservation activities. If you answered "yes" to these questions CSP may be right for you. To learn more about this program as well as others please visit our website at <http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov/> Contact your local NRCS office to schedule an appointment. Owners/operators who have current CSP contracts should be thinking if they want to re-enroll when their five-year contract expires. The 2010 contracts were the first to be able to do this for 2015. Additional enhancements are required and you still must meet minimum resource concerns to be eligible, but will not have to compete as in a regular CSP signup. Newly acquired land that has been farmed for more than one year can also be added at re-enrollment time.



CSP cover crop.

Installing and/or Modifying Drainage Systems

By **Shantel Lozinski**
USDA-NRCS

August 2011 marked a change in how Minnesota NRCS services AD 1026 drainage requests, this change was done to follow national policy. In the past when you filled out a AD1026 form for drainage we would refer to the existing official determination we had on file and make a recommendation. Now we will complete a certified wetland determination depending on the date on your existing 026 and map on file. If you have had a certified wetland determination completed on a tract of land and now you have changed your tile layout, a new 1026 should be completed with the new layout. Take your time when filling out the AD 1026 as the form was updated in October and changes were made.

Producers who choose to make drainage improvements without a certified wetland determination need to be aware that any drainage activities done in an area without previous cropping history; or in areas that are consistently wet, pose a high risk of resulting in converting a protected wetland area. Converting protected wetland areas could result in the loss of USDA program benefits on all the land the producer operates. Landowners are also reminded that the State of Minnesota has wetland protection provisions for all land uses including ag-lands. These provisions are administered through the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). The provisions are completely separate, though on ag-lands, similar to the USDA wetland protection requirements. To minimize your risk of converting a protected wetland area, plan to contact your local USDA Service Center and update your AD 1026 prior to conducting any land clearing and drainage projects. A few tips when making a request:

- 1026's are serviced on a tract basis unless the owner/operator specifically selects the fields. If you are looking to tile one field and the field is included in a tract of 400 ac, it would speed up the process to just request the determination on the one field.

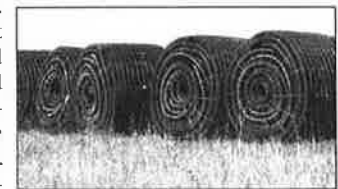
- If you are fixing an intake, cleaning a ditch or replacing a segment of tile at the same size and depth, be

sure to check just 7C and complete a drainage system worksheet describing the current extent of the ditch. This will allow you to get your 1026 back much faster than if you had requested a certified wetland determination.

- Be sure that the tract of land you are requesting the 1026 for shows up on your FSA producer data report. If you have recently purchased land and have not reported it to FSA it can slow the process. The tract of land needs to be on the producer data report before you can request a 1026 form this is done to ensure you have the authority to make the request.



- If you are looking to purchase land at auction be sure you know what you are buying. Request the wetland information from the auction company or realtor before the sale. This is considered private and sensitive information, without an information release we can't give out the information. Plan ahead.



- If you are requesting new tile in a field you know has a mapped wetland take the time to complete a drainage system worksheet at the same time as you complete the 1026 request. This form helps us to understand the existing tile on site. It will also save us the time to mail it out to you and wait for it to come back.

- If you are planning to remove any old building sites and groves please be reminded you should be completing an AD 1026 for the site. Without completing this form and allowing a determination to be done you run the risk of a violation due to tree removal and/or land leveling. When you add this previously non cropped land to your cropland acres FSA will flag it as a possible violation.

WCA Report

By Tom Warner – DISTRICT MANAGER

In 1992, the Minnesota Legislature passed one of the most comprehensive laws regulating activities in wetlands in the nation – the Wetland Conservation Act. While the Act has gone through several revisions since then, its goal of no-net loss in the quantity and quality of wetlands remains the same. This Act prohibits draining, filling, or excavating in a wetland except under limited circumstances.

Wetlands provide many benefits to the natural environment. They filter pollutants from runoff, improving water quality. They provide wildlife habitat for many species. Wetlands also reduce the effects of flooding and protect shorelines from erosion. It is because wetlands do so much that actions that could impact them are so regulated.

Determining the “jurisdictional” wetland boundary can be very difficult, and most cities and the county require a permit before draining, filling, or excavating in a wetland. For this reason, landowners are strongly encouraged to contact the local administrator before starting work.

What are federal requirements (i.e. Swampbuster)?

Since 1985, the Wetland Conservation provision of the federal farm bills (Swampbuster) requires all agricultural producers to protect the wetlands on the farms they own or operate in order to be eligible for USDA farm program benefits. Producers will not be eligible if they plant an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland that was converted by drainage, leveling, or any means after

December 23, 1985, or convert a wetland for the purpose of or to make agricultural commodity possible after November 28, 1990.

What is the state law (i.e. Wetland Conservation Act)?

The Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) is a state law. Realizing the important benefits of wetlands, the Minnesota Legislature in 1991 enacted the Wetland Conservation Act which aims for a no-net-loss of wetlands. Recognizing that local officials may have a better idea of local needs, the WCA gives administration authority of the Act to local governments. Chippewa County delegated the responsibility of the Act to the Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) oversees the law at the state level. WCA regulates activities that result in the draining, filling, or excavating of wetlands in Minnesota, including those on agricultural land. The law regulates all draining and filling of wetlands and if wetland loss is unavoidable, requires replacement.

What should agricultural landowners do before starting a project, including drainage, and maintenance that may impact a wetland?

1. Complete your “AD1026” form from your local USDA office.
2. Bring a copy to the SWCD office and explain what you plan to do.

The SWCD can advise you if your project is allowed under the state law, WCA, or if you need to submit an application to the local government, DNR, or the US Army Corps of Engineers. Involving your local SWCD is the easiest and best way to avoid problems.

Request a field visit by the SWCD. This can help identify regulated wetlands on your property, and regulation that could affect your project. Many wetlands do not contain standing water or are only saturated for part of the year, and can be difficult for landowners to identify.

Tell your contractor to submit a “Contractor Liability form.” Contractors who conduct projects that will impact

WETLANDS ARE PROTECTED BY THE WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT (WCA)

The Wetland Conservation Act promotes a no-net-loss of wetlands and protects the benefits wetlands provide.

The Act moves toward its no-net-loss goal by requiring persons proposing to drain or fill a wetland to:

- First, try to avoid disturbing the wetland.
- Second, try to minimize any impact on the wetland,
- And finally, to replace any lost wetland functions & values.

Any questions in Chippewa County contact Tom Warner
Chippewa Soil & Water Office
320-269-2139, Ext. 3

a wetland are required to notify the Chippewa SWCD.

Communication is the key! Compliance with USDA does not mean compliance with other wetland laws such as the state WCA law, DNR, or the US Army Corps of Engineers. A quick call or stop at the Chippewa SWCD office prior to beginning your project will help you comply with the laws and save a project from potential additional costs and delays.

Planning ahead is important. Come into the SWCD office as soon as possible on a project to find out if there is any possible wetland impact. If there is any potential wetland impact, the SWCD will inform you which agency or agencies will need to be contacted for a permit or authorization to do the work. Plan ahead! Don't come in Monday and expect an answer on Tuesday. If wetlands are in the vicinity of your project, depending on the project and the agency that has jurisdiction over the wetland, it could take up to a month to get authorization or a permit for your project.

Conservation Reserve Program in Chippewa County

By Liz Ludwig

CHIPPEWA COUNTY FSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) allows participants to enroll acreage in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality and provide wildlife habitat.

CRP participation is voluntary. Eligible landowners enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the landowners will receive annual rental payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost share for establishment.

October 2015 ended with 982 active CRP contracts in Chippewa County. This means 12,561.79 acres are enrolled, down 1026 acres from the end of September. It is the result of 1,347 acres expiring, but only 321 acres being enrolled October 1, 2015. The following is a breakdown of the CRP acres in our county.

CRP Practice Type	Acres in Chip. County
Wetland Restoration with Buffers	6004.36
Grass Filter Strips with Riparian Buffers	2867.68
Rare and Declining Habitat	2570.78
Grass Habitat	740.83
Field Windbreak/Shelterbelt	339.24
Living Snowfence/General Trees	38.90

If you have land that you feel may be best suited for conservation purposes, please contact our office to discover the eligibility requirements or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.



Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

Certifying that Minnesota farms and waters can prosper together

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) is a voluntary opportunity for farmers and agricultural landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices that protect our water. Those who implement and maintain approved farm management practices will be certified and, in turn, obtain regulatory certainty for a period of ten years. Through this program, certified producers receive:

- Regulatory certainty: certified producers are deemed to be in compliance with any new water quality rules or laws during the period of certification
- Recognition: certified producers may use their status to promote their business as protective of water quality
- Priority for technical assistance: producers seeking certification can obtain specially designated technical and financial assistance to implement practices that promote water quality

Through this program, the public receives:

- Assurance that certified producers are using conservation practices to protect Minnesota's lakes, rivers and streams

This program certifies farmers for managing the land within their operation in a way that protects water quality. Local conservation professionals assist farmers through the certification process. You

can begin by contacting Chippewa County Soil and Water Conservation District or a local Certifying Agent. A Program Application will need to be completed to begin the process but certification of compliance with existing laws and rules will not need to be complete until the Certification Agreement is signed. The Certifying Agent will work with you to complete the assessment process. The first step of this process is the Assessment Tool. To prepare for this it will be helpful to gather some information about the management of your operation. A Farm producer Data Report and maps of all the tracts in your farm operation may be obtained at your FSA office. Other information helpful for the assessment includes soil test reports, nutrient application information, manure tests and application records as well as pesticide records. The Certifier will also need to conduct a field review of your farm to look for erosion or other potential impacts to water quality. Remedies to any issues found will need to be included in the certification agreement. When your whole farm operation meets program standards it will be eligible to become a Water Quality Certified Farm.

For more information about MAWQCP program, please contact Chippewa SWCD at 320-269-2139 ext.3.

Chippewa SWCD now sells seed and offers seed drill service

Chippewa SWCD now sells native and cool season grass mixes for landowners who need to meet program requirements for programs such as CRP, CREP, and RIM, or for property owners who want to enhance their existing habitat on their own. The district also installs grass plantings with a newly acquired grass drill. The new seed drill is capable of installing many different varieties of food plot mixes for wildlife as well. Chippewa SWCD was able to acquire donations from the local Chippewa County Pheasants Forever Chapter and the National Wild Turkey Federation Upper Minnesota River Valley Chapter to help purchase the seed drill. A big thank you to those chapters for helping fund a service that will provide more habitat and erosion control in Chippewa County.

The new seed drill service includes 1 operator, tractor and drill. The price for seeding is charged by the amount of acres planted plus a mobilization fee:

- \$100 flat mobilization fee within Chippewa County (add \$1.00 per mile for out of County projects)
- \$25/acre planting fee (\$100 minimum planting fee for 4 acres and less)

Seeding Dates:

Warm season grasses require soil temperatures of at least 50 degrees before they will germinate. This is 8 to 10 degrees warmer than the requirement for cool season grasses. Therefore, the optimal seeding time for planting warm season grasses, either alone or in combination with cool season grasses, usually occurs between mid-spring and early

summer when moisture and temperature are most favorable. May 15th to June 30th is the typical window for planting warm season grasses in this area.

Note: Late April through June is a busy time for the district. The tree program is usually in full swing at the same time CRP and other grass plantings need to be planted. Contacting the district early on to get on the list for planting is crucial. Unfortunately there will be a limit to how many acres that can be planted each spring by the district.

Seedbed Condition:

Note: It is the landowners' responsibility to prepare a decent seedbed before planting.

A firm seedbed is very important when seeding native grasses. The district's Truax seed drill needs a firm seedbed in order to

turn the double disc openers properly, which is crucial for seed planting depth. A firm seedbed also helps conserve moisture and ensure good seed to soil contact which is critical for adequate germination and an overall successful planting. **IMPORTANT:** Recently filled ground should be packed with a coil or roller packer, or something equivalent prior to planting. The seedbed is considered firm enough when an adult's footprint penetrates no more than 1/8 to 1/4 inch deep. For example: untilled bean stubble works great for seeding with the Truax drill.

To order seed or get on the seeding list, please contact Zach or Tom at:

- Zach:
320-269-2139 ext.105
- Tom:
320-269-2139 ext.115



Chippewa SWCD Services



• Mulching and Crimping



• Rototilling



• Seeding



• Tractor Mowing

Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District provides many services to landowners. The district can do more than just plant trees with a tree planter and install fabric with a fabric machine. The district can also assist landowners with many different site prep and conservation program installation needs. Chippewa SWCD has a tractor with many attachments that can be used for many different applications. Those attachments include a six-foot wide roto-tiller for preparing planting sites for tree plantings, grass plantings, and food plots. The district owns a 7-foot wide, heavy duty rotary mower which can be used for mowing burn breaks, controlling noxious weeds, CRP mid-contract management, etc. The district also has a mulcher and crimper that can be used in conjunction with highly erodible planting sites. Seeding services are also available with a Truax native grass drill. The district is capable of hauling this equipment anywhere in the county and surrounding areas. Contact the Chippewa SWCD at 320-269-2139 ext.3 for more information on prices or to discuss your site prep and planting needs.

Wildlife Tree Planting Growth Progression



2011



2013

Stop in the SWCD office to discuss your habitat improvement project or give us a call at 320-269-2139, ext. 3.

Better habitat projects don't just happen, make them happen!



2014



2015



2015 Tree Plantings

The 2015 tree planting season was a busy one for Chippewa SWCD. It was similar to many previous successful seasons for the district. There were roughly 6,000 trees planted on riparian buffers, field windbreaks, farmstead shelterbelts, and wildlife plantings. All of these practices combined accounted for 19.5 acres of conservation plantings. There were 23 individual plantings in all.

There was also 15,000 feet of weed barrier fabric applied over the trees to control weeds, conserve moisture, and accelerate tree growth. The fabric is a 6-foot wide geo-textile material that allows moisture to pass through it but does not allow weed growth to occur. Light disking or planting cool season grasses and mowing periodically between the trees is still recommended to control weeds between the tree rows.

Cost share was available to qualified landowners for all of the above practices. Cost share was used to offset the cost of the trees and fabric.

Landowners who are thinking about planting trees this spring should stop in ASAP to develop a tree plan and order the trees while supplies are available.

Have you ordered your trees?

Our mission is to provide low cost quality trees to landowners for conservation practices. We sell northern grown stock assuring that the trees will survive and prosper in our Minnesota climate.

What steps do you take if you are planning a conservation tree planting?



- 1) Decide where and what you are doing: a farmstead shelterbelt, windbreak renovation, field windbreak or wildlife planting.
- 2) Call the SWCD office for an appointment to set up a free site visit.
- 3) A plan will be drawn up, trees recommended, soil map checked to determine what type of trees will grow there and the amount of room needed.
- 4) Site preparation should be done in the fall or early spring.
- 5) Trees are ordered in the fall for spring delivery. The earlier the order, the better chance of receiving the tree varieties you want/need.
- 6) Trees are planted in the spring. We have a tree planter and planting charges are included in the cost of the trees. (Landowner provides tractor and driver.) We hand plant one-gallon pots for \$1.00 per potted evergreen and \$2.00 per two gallon potted evergreen.
- 7) Tree maintenance includes keeping them weed free and watered as needed. Several ways of keeping them weed free is using rolls of fabric matting, tree matt squares, as well as chemical and mechanical control.

For information call Tom Wamer or Zach Bothun, SWCD Technicians, at 320-269-2139 ext. 3.

Trees Available

CONIFERS (Potted)

B.H. Spruce	12"-15"	7.00
	15"-18"	8.00
	18"-24"	10.00
Colorado Spruce	15"-18"	8.00
	18"-24"	10.00
Austrian Pine	18"-24"	10.00
Ponderosa Pine	15"-18"	8.00
Scotch Pine	15"-18"	8.00
Eastern Red Cedar	15"-18"	8.00

CONIFERS (Bare Root)

Includes planting charge

B.H. Spruce	8"-12"	2.00
Colorado Spruce	9"-12"	2.00
Austrian Pine	8"-14"	2.00
Ponderosa Pine	8"-14"	2.00
Scotch Pine	8"-14"	2.00
Eastern Red Cedar	9"-12"	2.00
N. White Cedar	12"-18"	2.00

DECIDUOUS TREES & SHRUBS

Includes planting charge

American Plum	2.00	Norway Poplar	2.00
Amur Honeysuckle	2.00	Red Splendor Crab	2.00
Amur Maple	2.00	Redosier Dogwood	2.00
Black Walnut	2.00	Silver Maple	2.00
Buffaloberry	2.00	Cottonwood	2.00
Flame Willow	2.00	Cranberrybush	2.00
Caragana	2.00	Linden	2.00
Chokecherry	2.00	Nannyberry	2.00
Common Lilac	2.00	Bur Oak	2.00
Cotoneaster	2.00	Red Oak	2.00
Green Ash	2.00	White Oak	2.00
Hackberry	2.00		



TREE TUBES	4X4	WEED BARRIER
\$4.00	TREE MATS	FABRIC (installed)
	\$3.00	.50/ft.



CREP III coming soon

By Zach Bothun
DISTRICT TECHNICIAN

On December 15, 2015, Governor Dayton submitted a \$795 million proposal to the United States Department of Agriculture for a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) for Minnesota. This federal, state and local partnership would work with farmers and other landowners across Minnesota to implement conservation practices on up to 100,000 acres of land to restore and protect water quality. This will be the states third CREP signup. The first signup was a success. The second signup was slowed because it was not received well by landowners during a time of high grain prices.

The proposal focuses on prioritized and targeted acres that would provide the greatest water quality and habitat benefits. It would fund the implementation of buffer filter strips, wetland restoration projects, and wellhead protection efforts. Funding provided through CREP will provide additional financial support for farmers and landowners as Minnesota works to implement the requirements of new buffer legislation. The CREP proposal is a five-agency effort, led by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and including the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

About the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

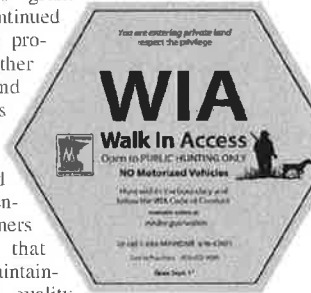
The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is an offshoot of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the country's largest private-land conservation program. Administered by the USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA), and the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR), CREP targets high-priority conservation issues identified by local, state, or tribal governments or non-governmental organizations. The proposed federal, state and local partnership would voluntarily retire environmentally sensitive land using the nationally-recognized Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve program. This is accomplished by establishing conservation practices via payments to farmers, ranchers, and agricultural land owners.

For any questions about CREP or RIM, or to discuss potential eligibility on your land, please feel free to stop by the Chippewa SWCD office or give us a call at 320-269-2139 ext.3.

Walk-In-Access Program signup coming this spring

By Zach Bothun
DISTRICT TECHNICIAN

This spring there will be an opportunity to enroll your high-quality wildlife habitat and conservation land into the Walk-In Access (WIA) program. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources was successful in receiving a Voluntary Public Access – Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP) Grant from USDA NRCS, which was funded from the 2014 Farm Bill to support the Walk-In Access program. This grant will allow continued funding of the program for another three years and provide hunters with public access to privately-owned land by compensating landowners for allowing that access and maintaining their high quality wildlife habitat. Currently there are about 22,800 acres enrolled in the WIA program and the new funding will provide enough compensation to maintain those acres with additional acres for the next three years. Individuals can hunt during any open hunting season (including spring turkey) with no landowner contacts necessary. All WIA areas are posted with WIA signs, published in an annual book, and posted



on the DNR web site as download maps and GPS points. Stop by the Chippewa SWCD office to pick up a copy of the WIA map book.

Enrollment Criteria:

WIA enrollment is targeted towards privately-owned lands that consist of high-quality wildlife habitat or private lands that are already in a conservation program, such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM), and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Public access is granted for hunting during any legal season between Sept. 1 and May 31, the following year. Sites consisting of a minimum of 40 acres are what is desired for enrollment, but smaller sites could be eligible for enrollment on a case by case basis and if they are contiguous with a WMA/WPA or another WIA resulting in at least 40 contiguous acres open to public hunting.

Payment rates for signing up with the WIA program are:

- \$10/ac. base payment
- \$1/ac. incentive payment if acres enrolled is > 140ac.
- \$1/ac. incentive payment if less than 1/2 mile from public hunting land (WMA/WPA)
- \$1/ac. incentive if enrolled for multiple years

If you are interested in enrolling your property into the WIA program, or if you would like more information, please contact the Chippewa SWCD at 320-269-2139, ext. 3 or visit www.mndnr.gov/walkin

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

By Shantel Lozinski
DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

The EQIP program's purpose is to solve a variety of natural resource problems while being compatible with land use goals. Some of the practices covered by EQIP are water and sediment control basins, terraces, cover crops, prescribed grazing, closure of earthen manure pits, sealing abandoned wells and many more. EQIP is a competitive program that ranks applications based on national, state, and local resource concerns that were identified and prioritized during the local work group process.

Planting and harvest season is an excellent time to check your field for excessive erosion which may also have an impact on water quality. If you find that your farm is washing more than it should be, we may have a solution to the erosion that has been occurring. Water and Sediment control basins work well when the watersheds are relatively small, by catching the water before it has a real chance to do any damage, to improve farmability of sloping land, trap sediment, reduce downstream runoff and improve downstream water quality, utilizing a surface intake and sub-surface conduit to convey the water to a suitable outlet. The maintenance is typically low and is by far the most effective and accommodating practice.

For larger watersheds another option would be a grassed waterway. These are used when watersheds are 40 acres or more, an excavated channel with crossable side slopes that would be seeded down to sod forming grasses, to convey runoff from terraces or diversions or water concentrations to reduce erosion and flooding. We would also use subsurface drainage if needed to keep the channel dry. These have been a standard practice and can be a useful source of hay once they are established. Grassed and earthen terrace/diversions are another option that



The EQIP program's purpose is to solve a variety of natural resource problems such as erosion.

may work well in certain situations for sheet and rill erosion or in situations like water from a road ditch running across farm land.

Landowners and producers interested in EQIP are encouraged to contact the office and schedule an appointment to talk about resource concerns and possible program participation. You can visit our USDA Service Center at 629 North 11th Street, Montevideo Minnesota, or call (320) 269-2139 extension 3, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Information about EQIP can also be obtained by visiting our website at www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov

2014 Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (DRAP) for the Flood of 2014

Chippewa County was included in the Presidential Disaster Declaration DR-4182 for damages occurring during the incident period of the disaster. June 11 through July 11, 2014. Chippewa County was awarded \$201,355 for Phase 2 of the Flood Recovery to fix existing conservation practices that were damaged or install new conservation practices on 10 sites that had severe erosion. These sites have been surveyed and are currently being designed so that these erosion problems will be fixed within the next two years.

Currently, DRAP Phase 3 applications are being taken through Feb. 26, 2016. Phase 3 funds may be used for the repair of existing conservation practices or the construction of new practices, as long as the project is determined to be needed as a result of the Flood of 2014.

Contact the Chippewa SWCD at 320-269-2139, Ext. 3, if you have an erosion practice that needs to be fixed or an erosion problem that was caused by the 2014 flood and would like assistance to correct the problem. There is up to 100 percent cost-share assistance available for eligible sites.



Hawk Creek Watershed Project

Heidi Rauenhorst
PROJECT COORDINATOR

Dean Dambrotten
PLANNER/FIELD TECHNICIAN

Jordan Austin
WATER QUALITY OUTREACH TECHNICIAN

The Hawk Creek Watershed Project (HCWP) ends another year with more best management practices (BMPs) in place and more water quality data collected. In 2015, the HCWP, with assistance from the local NRCS/SWCD offices, was able to offer a cost-share assistance program for the implementation of cover crops. The program required at least two species be in the seed mix and then left over winter. Several land owners/occupiers planted combinations of oats, radishes, turnips, vetch, rye, and triticale. With this program, over 1,000 acres of cover crops were planted this fall.

The monitoring season was uneventful as far as high flows are concerned. All six of the sites the HCWP monitors received steady, small amounts of rain, resulting in great growing conditions and little to no flooding. Along with water quality monitoring and BMP implementation, two other major points of emphasis for 2015 were aquatic invasive species (AIS) and finishing the Hawk Creek Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) process. For more information on AIS and the

WRAPS process, please visit our website www.hawkcreekwatershed.org

Since the inception of the HCWP in 1999, a total of 934 landowners have received financial assistance for either BMPs or septic system upgrade loans that have improved water quality and reduced erosion. The HCWP also holds regular public meetings in Clara City and an annual meeting in Willmar, where we strive to have multiple speakers with different backgrounds present relevant topics to our area. At the annual meeting on Feb. 25, 2015, the HCWP had presentations by Ryan Jones (South Central Technical Service Area), George Rehm (Discovery Farms-Minnesota), and Mark Seeley (University of MN). If you would like to get involved or attend any of our upcoming meetings, please

contact the HCWP office to receive meeting notices and agendas.

HCWP, along with its tri-county watershed partners, continues to promote soil and water stewardship and offer cost-share funds for installation of BMPs aimed at improving water quality. The HCWP works with area landowners, county staff, SWCD/NRCS/FSA offices, and County Drainage Authorities to install a variety of projects.

Below is a break down of the projects done so far in 2015.

the help and funding from our partnerships with federal, state, and local governmental agencies and the landowners!

In addition to the projects listed above, HCWP also provides cost-share funds for:

- * Wetland Restorations
- * Shoreline Restorations
- * Rain Gardens
- * Critical Area Seedings
- * Grassed Waterways
- * Terraces
- * Ag Waste/Livestock Exclusions
- * Other Qualifying Projects

Breakdown of the 2014 Projects:		
Project	Phosphorous Reduced (lbs./yr.)	HCWP Funds
1 Water and Sediment Control Basin	14.35	\$ 8,914.55
1 Bank/Gully Stabilization	126.79	\$ 24,630.16
2 Grade Stabilizations	139.31	\$ 22,614.00
4 Buffer Incentives (17.55 Acres)	134.92	\$ 1,413.00
4 Side Inlets	22.00	\$ 4,506.00
6 Alternative Intakes	44.49	\$ 2,107.50
15 Cover Crop Plantings (1,018.67 Acres)	691.45	\$ 25,466.75
Total	1,173.31	\$ 89,651.96

These projects would not have been completed without

If you would like additional information about any of these projects or if you would like to install any of the above listed practices, please call us at (320) 523-3666 or visit our website at www.hawkcreekwatershed.org for more information about the HCWP and our partners. Also, if you are interested in upgrading your septic system, please contact either the HCWP or the environmental office of your respective county.



2015 Chippewa River Watershed Project Highlights

Kylene Olson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jennifer Hoffman
WATERSHED SPECIALIST

Luwaina Al-Otaibi
MONITORING TECHNICIAN

The Chippewa River Watershed Project (CRWP) is a multi-county joint powers entity established as a cooperative partnership set on improving water quality and watershed health in the Chippewa River and its tributaries. The CRWP has no regulatory or permitting authority and collects no tax revenue. The intent of the CRWP is to work cooperatively with local, state, federal and non-profit agencies, landowners and citizens within the Chippewa River Watershed to increase services and utilize funding and technical resources to greater extent so that water quality goals can be achieved while still promoting healthy and robust agricultural, industrial and recreational economies. The CRWP seeks funding to be used for water quality monitoring, best management practices, and citizen engagement across the watershed.

2015 Activities specific to Chippewa County:
Water quality monitoring at the Dryweather Creek site resumed this past summer. Dryweather Creek is the outlet of County Ditch 22 drainage. Water samples are collected during both low flow and storm event conditions and lab tested for total suspended solids (TSS), phosphorus and nitrogen. Intense rainfall in mid-May led to highly erosive and flooding conditions in this part of the watershed. During this time, multiple samples were above the state water quality standards of 54 ppm (parts per million) TSS, 10 ppm Nitrogen and 0.15 ppm Phosphorus. However for much of the remaining season, levels met the standards. Funding for these samples was provided through the Chippewa County Water Plan and a grant from the MN Pollution Control Agency.

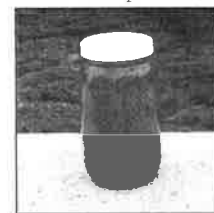
In the past year, the CRWP applied and secured Low

Interest Loan Money from the MN Pollution Control Agency for watershed residents of Chippewa County to be used for subsurface sewage treatment systems, more commonly known as septic systems. These monies are administered through Chippewa County at 3 percent interest and are placed on the property's tax statement. Ask for an application when you apply for your permit at the Land and Resource Management Office.

Tile line monitoring continued at two sites in Chippewa County and were funded through work related to the Chippewa 10% Project. While the systems and responses are complex, some insightful relationships between flow, concentrations, and downstream effects are evident. The data is still being analyzed and will be shared with landowners and through our website as information becomes available.

The CRWP was successful in securing multiple grant funds in 2015. These grants have specific and targeted focuses throughout the watershed based on water quality data and landowner needs. One grant through the Clean Water Partnership program of the MN Pollution Control Agency will be used for a major streambank protection project on Dryweather Creek. The CRWP worked cooperatively with the Chippewa SWCD and Chippewa County to include the project as part of the grant proposal and secure \$65,000 to be used on the bio-engineered project to stop erosion and protect a county road. Construction is tentatively set for fall 2016. Landowners of Chippewa County within the boundaries of the Chippewa River Watershed or its tributaries may be eligible for other cost-share programs related to

cover crops, alternative tile intakes, and drop intakes for gully erosion. Contact the CRWP office 320-269-2139 ext 120 with questions.



Dryweather Creek 5/18/15: TSS - 312 ppm, TP - 0.644 ppm, N 7.91 ppm.



Dryweather Creek 7/22/15: TSS - 5 ppm, TP - 0.087 ppm, N 3.30 ppm.



Gully erosion from May storm event, fixed with drop inlet.

Chippewa Soil & Water Conservation District

OutReach

2015 Women's Field Day

by: Shantel Lozinski, USDA -NRCS

Women's field day: Women Dig Mussels" was held on June 18th at Memorial Park in Granite Falls. Bernard Sietman, Malacologist with the Minnesota DNR was our guest speaker who provided a power point presentation with several video clips of native mussels in their natural habitat. Microscopes were set up to view juvenile mussels and their movements. The field day ended with some time to explore the

river bank and sandbars for mussels. A catered meal was provided and a number of door prizes were given away. Over the last few years we have had some amazing speakers and interesting field trips including viewing the unique plant communities around some of the rock outcrops in the Granite Falls area, a prairie walk on the Chippewa prairie, a tour of Hinterland Vineyard with an all local food meal, and a walking tour of the dam removal on the Chippewa River in Montevideo. What

will be next? Watch local newspapers next spring for promotion of the 2016 field day.



5th Grade Field Day



2015 Poster Winners "Local Heroes: Your Hardworking Pollinators"



Bethany Bratsch



Keihly Gallinger



Emily Santjer



Ella Bourne



The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



Chippewa County Local Water Resources Protection and Management Program Annual Report

Chippewa County Local Water Management Plan ... locally driven to work for you!

By JoAnn Blomme
ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNICIAN

In 2015, we chose our primary focus to be on water quality and education. Water quality can be affected in many different ways. We often only think of the agricultural or urban outside effects on water quality but forget to consider the other pollutants that are used by everyone, by every household, in the watershed. So we chose three of

the larger topics to raise awareness on in 2015; they are pharmaceutical waste, household hazardous waste and septic systems.

First I would like to address PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE. A growing concern in our communities is the abuse, by youth and others, of medications not prescribed to them. Safe disposal makes medicines less available. Proper disposal of medication helps protect our environment also.


Research by the MPCA confirms that a wide variety of unregulated chemicals is ending up in Minnesota's lakes and rivers. The chemicals, including pharmaceuticals and personal care products, are of concern because many have properties that can interfere with the functioning of hormones in animals and people. Wastewater treatment plants and individual septic systems are only able to remove half of the prescription drugs and other newly emerging contaminants.

So what can you do? "Take It To THE BOX!" It is a FREE safe disposal option to get rid of unneeded and/or expired prescriptions and over-the-counter medications. This includes both human and animal medications along with illegal drugs. For more information, see ad below or go to www.Co.Chippewa.MN.US

Next I would like to talk about HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW). A household hazardous product that contains a hazard component becomes HHW when it becomes unusable or unwanted and needs to be disposed of. The best disposal method is to be able to use the product for its intended use, but if unable to do so, bring to the regional facility which is located at the Kandiyohi County Regional HHW Facility in Willmar, MN. This is a FREE program for households. Businesses must register with the Kandiyohi County Regional HHW Facility. For more information, see ad below or go to www.Co.Chippewa.MN.US.

Last but definitely not least, SUB-SURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS (SSTS) and WASTE-WATER SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS. SSTS are designed to treat effluent from households and businesses that are not served within a jurisdiction that is hooked up to municipal wastewater treatment. The goal of both of these systems is to treat the sewage for a specific home, business, or group of properties; there by, providing proper treatment of sewage, recycling water back into the natural environment with reduced health risk to humans and animals and preventing surface and groundwater contamination. Currently we have Low Interest Loans and Grant Opportunities available for SSTS upgrades and for existing municipal residents hooking up to municipal sewers. See ad on page 3.

A special thank you to the 2015 Water Plan Committee for their guidance and input throughout the year: Joe Keller, Chair; Marc Stevens, Vice-Chair; Jaci Ast, Robert Nielsen, Byron Hayunga, Larry Kittelson, Matt Gilbertson and Jeffrey Lopez. We are currently looking to fill two (2) vacancies on the committee. They are three year terms and we meet three to four times a year. For more information feel free to contact a current committee member, your County Commissioner or JoAnn Blomme, Environmental Technician with Chippewa County Land and Resource Management at 320-269-6231 for more information.



Take It To

THE BOX

A FREE & Safe Disposal Option for

Unneeded and/or expired
Prescriptions & Over-the-Counter
Medications for both humans and
animals and illegal drugs.

AVAILABLE for ALL
Chippewa County Residents.

Location: Montevideo Police Department, Lobby at City Hall,
located at 103 Canton Ave., Montevideo, MN.

Times: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Rules:

YES Only deposit unneeded and/or expired prescriptions,
over-the-counter medication for both humans and
animals and illegal drugs.

NO radioactive chemo drugs or IV bags

NO needles or syringes

NO garbage or trash

Thank You for caring.


Proper disposal of medication helps protect our environment. Wastewater treatment cannot remove most medications. Reduce negative impacts to the environment—use the drop box.

Sponsored by:

- Montevideo Police Department
- Chippewa County Sheriff's Department
- Chippewa County Land & Resource Management
- Chippewa County Local Water Plan

PROPERLY DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Kandiyohi County Regional HHW Program
1404 22nd Street SW
Willmar, MN 56201
(320) 231-3587



Hours
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday
Closed Saturdays

**Chippewa County is a participating county so
disposal is *FREE to Homeowners.**

** For information about the Clean Shop Program for businesses or Ag Pesticides Disposal program, call (320) 231-3587.*

NOTE: businesses and farmers with ag chemicals must call for an appointment.

Contacts:
Chippewa County Land & Resource Management at 320-269-6231 or
Kandiyohi County Regional HHW Facility at 320-231-3587.

Supported by:
Chippewa County Land & Resource Management - Minnesota Pollution
Control Agency - Kandiyohi County Regional HHW Facility

Need Cover?



Does the county drainage ditch or protected waters running through your property look like this? If so, you will need a buffer. Stop by the Chippewa SWCD office to discuss your options and sign up for programs and services, or call us at 320-269-2139, ext.3.

Chippewa SWCD can install CRP, buffers, various types of grass plantings and food plot mixes. Contact Chippewa SWCD today!



Visit our website: chippewaswcd.org