

# **LE SUEUR COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

## **Annual Work Plan for 2009**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Annual Work Plan is to set forth our 2009 plan of action.

For the next year the Le Sueur county SWCD will work with individuals, groups, and other government agencies to achieve the objectives of this Annual Work Plan. The District will concentrate its efforts to control soil erosion and sedimentation, promote the proper use of natural resources in the District to maintain water quality.

High priority will be given to tillage practices in controlling gully, ephemeral, sheer and rill erosion, sedimentation and pollution. The District will encourage land occupiers to conserve soil and water resources through state and federal cost-share programs, demonstrations, educational activities, and technical assistance.

The boundaries of Le Sueur County make up the boundaries of the District. The County has five (5) commissioner districts and one (1) supervisor is elected from each commissioner district to a four (4) year term. The Board then elects a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer from its members to serve one year terms.

### **II. MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Le Sueur County Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide technical, financial, and educational support to the public for the purpose of conserving and protecting soil, water, and other natural resources.

The SWCD prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age disability, sex, marital status, family status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal or individual income.

### III. GOAL & OBJECTIVES

**Goal:** Provide an Efficient District Operation – **Action:**

1. Hold regular board meetings on the second Tuesday of each month.
2. Develop a budget, an annual plan of work, annual report and a comprehensive plan.
3. Staff a District Manager, District Engineer and Program Specialist.
4. Provide and encourage training for all personnel to better carry out District programs.
5. Conduct employee evaluations and update job descriptions.
6. Supervisors review policies and develop priorities yearly.
7. Review memorandums of understanding yearly.
8. Provide representation to various organizations: Such as but not limited to: Zone 10, RC&D, GBERBI, EQIP work group, Lake Volney association, German-Jefferson Lake Association, Cannon River Watershed Partnership
9. Complete Elink reporting for BWSR
10. Provide an adequate working environment for SWCD and USDA employees, which rent from the District
11. Provide an informative web page to keep the public and other agencies updated on District programs and happenings

**Goal:** Promote & Educate the Public on the SWCD's Programs – **Action:**

1. Insert District information in FSA newsletters
2. Select an Outstanding Conservationist yearly
3. Contact county schools regarding the poster and essay program sponsored by MASWCD, Area 6 and the District
4. Set up displays at the county fair
5. Donate to the Envirothon
6. Publish news articles to update the public on tree sales and conservation issues
7. Promote soil stewardship week
8. Work with Extension to promote education in the classroom and sponsor a 4-H Conservationist award
9. Participate in conservation day at Sakatah State Park for all county 5<sup>th</sup> graders
10. Hold regular staff meetings
11. Continue to maintain the SWCD web site
12. Hold an annual conservation tour with District staff, board members and NRCS employees
13. Continue meeting with other agencies to prioritize resource concerns
14. Participate in an Arbor Day event
15. Continue to administer the rain gauge program, monitoring rainfall within the county
16. Assist Pheasants Forever in choosing a "Wildlife Conservationist of the Year"
17. Work with Pheasants Forever in promoting seed for wildlife food plots.
18. Participate in conservation tillage demonstrations and tour.

**Objective:** Implement the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act – **Action:**

1. Administer the WCA for Le Sueur County through the Joint Powers Agreement, between Le Sueur County and the District, checking out all inquiries and complaints concerning wetland activities within the county.
2. Assist landowners in determining if a wetland is subject to the WCA and providing them with an up to date list of qualified wetland delineators working within the county.
3. Provide technical assistance needed for wetland exemption or replacement certification.
4. Provide technical assistance to LGU's.
5. Serve on the WCA technical panel.
6. Monitor replacement wetlands within Le Sueur County to make sure they meet wetland criteria.
7. Work with NRCS investigating every drain/fill request they receive to make sure the WCA is not violated.
8. Encourage landowners to restore wetlands in CRP acres.
9. Assist landowners with requests for permits to excavate wildlife ponds.

**Objective:** Reduce non-point source pollution entering the Minnesota River  
**Action:**

1. High priority given to landowners adjacent to MN River and its tributaries.
2. Encourage landowners in high priority erosion areas to enroll land into the RIM, CRP, WRP, WHIP and Grassland Reserves Program.
3. Administer the State Revolving Fund program within Le Sueur County.
4. Continue to work with Extension Service and NRCS on the annual transect tillage survey.
5. Participate on the Three Rivers RC&D board.
7. Participate with Zone 10 Joint Powers Agreement to improve water quality in the MN River.
8. Apply for special grant funds for cost-share practices to improve water quality.

**Objective:** Reduce non-point source pollution entering area lakes – **Action:**

1. Continue to work with the German-Jefferson Clean Water Partnership.
2. Continue to work with landowners around Lake Volney on controlling sediment from entering the lake.
3. Continue to work with the watershed for the Washington Lake Association, MPCA, DNR and Planning and Zoning on their Clean Water Partnership for Lake Washington.
4. Work with landowners to install buffer strips around all lakes, ditches and streams in the county.
5. Secure funds from the Cannon River Watershed Association to work with landowners to control sediment.
6. Restore Rennenberg Lake.
7. Promote education to landowners around county lakes on residue and manure management.
8. Provide a watershed specialist for technical assistance to Clean Water Partnerships.
9. Promote blind inlets to control sediment entering lakes and streams.

**Objective:** Participate in the implementation of Le Sueur County Water Plan – **Action:**

1. Provide technical and administrative assistance to Le Sueur County for the County Water Plan.
2. Encourage private landowners to place existing wetlands and prior converted land into the RIM, CRP, WRP and WHIP.
3. Provide technical assistance to the lake associations for identifying and procuring cost-share assistance for water quality improvement through state and federal grant programs.
4. Promote buffer strips around lakes, county ditches, rivers and creeks in cultivated fields.
5. Develop an awareness/educational program regarding conservation tillage practices and other erosion and sediment control measures.
6. Continue to monitor wells within the county for DNR.

7. Actively provide or distribute information to landowners on availability of state or federal technical and financial assistance for proper land and water management.
8. Provide technical assistance to livestock operators with high pollution potential.
9. Provide technical assistance to the County Feedlot Officer.

**Objective:** Continue to assist landowners in implementing their FSA plans during FY09 – **Action:**

1. Provide information on new technology to landowners.
2. Conduct a tour showing no-till fields, equipment and techniques.
3. Assist landowners in determining the best type of tillage for their soil type.
4. Continue to participate in the county transect survey to monitor progress in residue management.

**Objective:** Reduce soil erosion and prevent degradation of water quality by carrying out effective cost-share programs. Over 5,000 feet of terraces and blocks were installed in 2008 and the District anticipates 10,000 feet more in 2009 – **Action:**

1. Provide technical and administrative assistance for the state cost-share program.
2. Promote the cost-share programs through the District web site, news articles and newsletters.
3. Inform Le Sueur County residents regarding various forms of non-point and point sources of pollution and provide technical assistance.
4. Continue to apply for additional cost-share funds through special grants.

**Objective:** Implement the RIM Reserve program and assist with the federal CRP, WRP, and WHIP programs – **Action:**

1. Work with the Basin Alliance for the Lower Mississippi in Minnesota to manage the CREP II program in the Cannon River watershed in Le Sueur County.
2. Manage the RIM and CREP easements.
3. Provide technical assistance for all programs.

4. Encourage landowners to plant a mix of shrubs, cool and warm season grasses for wildlife diversity.
5. Encourage landowners to extend or re-bid their CRP contracts on land that is highly erosive.
6. Encourage food plots on CRP for wildlife.
7. Provide assistance for wildlife tree/shrub plantings.

**Objective:** Administer the State Revolving Fund Program in Le Sueur County – **Action:**

1. Apply to the MN Department of Agriculture for SRF low interest loan money each year the program is available.
3. The District has processed over \$2,000,000 in SRF loan requests for ag waste projects, updating septic systems, purchasing conservation tillage equipment and installing erosion control practices. The District has applied for an additional \$100,000 in new monies for the CY09.
4. Continue to inform Le Sueur County residents of the SRF program through the District website, newsletters and newspaper articles.
5. Request engineering and technical assistance from Zone 10 staff and help make SRF projects happen.
6. Provide a District supervisor and staff person for the Zone 10 board.

**Objective:** Increase planting of trees and shrubs for field and farmstead windbreaks, reforestation and living snowfences – **Action:**

1. Stress to landowners the need for field and farmstead windbreaks.
2. Provide a variety of trees and shrubs for sale to landowners.
3. Provide tree planters to encourage landowners to plant more trees.
4. Offer windbreak design and layout assistance.
5. Work with MN DOT to establish living snow fences along state highways.
6. Use news articles to inform the public of the need to plant trees and wildlife food plots.
7. Educate the public on the need for living snow fences.

**Objective:** Contract with Le Sueur County to provide ditch inspector to monitor county ditches – **Action:**

1. Inspect ditches for sediment accumulation and recommend repairs as needed.
  2. Recommend erosion control structures next to ditches to reduce sediment and nutrients entering the ditches.
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1. Supervise ditch clean outs and repairs to make sure good conservation practices are used.
  2. Promote buffer strips along all county ditches.

#### IV. STAFFING NEEDS

##### Le Sueur County SWCD Workload Analysis

Activity	Staff Years		
	Administration	Technical	Clerical
Implement WCA	.30	.55	.30
Implement State Cost-Share Program	.15	.80	.10
Reduce non-point source pollution - entering MN River - enter area lakes	.15	.45	.10
Assist NRCS, FSA & Le Sueur Co. - CRP, WHIP, WRP programs - farm plans - water plans	.65	.80	.20
Manage RIM/CREP	.40	.40	.30
Administer SRF low interest loan prog.	.20	.05	.10
Manage tree program	.05	.10	.15
Continue ditch authority	.65	.80	.05
Totals	2.55	3.95	1.30

To achieve the above objectives, staff required includes one full time District Manager, one full time District Technician and one full time Program Specialist.

## V. COST-SHARE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### High Priority Erosion Problems

High priority erosion problems mean areas where erosion from wind and water is occurring equal to, or in excess of 2xT tons per acre per year, any area that exhibits active gully erosion, or is identified as high priority in the comprehensive local water plan or the conservation district's comprehensive plan.

State cost-share funds will be used to install critical area stabilization, diversions, grass waterways, waste management, erosion or water control structures, and terraces.

### High Priority Water Quality

High priority water quality problems mean areas where sediment, nutrients, chemicals or other pollutants discharge to DNR designated protected waters or to any high priority waters as identified in the comprehensive local water plan, or discharge to a sinkhole or groundwater. The pollutant delivery rate to the water source is in amounts that will impair the quality or usefulness of the water resource.

### High Priority Feedlots

High priority feedlots include lots with a pollution potential rating from the feedlot model greater than or equal to one and lots discharging pollutants to DNR designated protected waters, a sinkhole, or shallow soil overlying fractured or cavernous bedrock within 100 feet of a water well.

### State Cost-Share Funding

The Le Sueur County SWCD allocation for FY09 is \$34,447.00. These dollars will be used to install practices in high priority erosion areas. The District Board has a policy of \$3500.00 per practice not to exceed 75% of the project.

The District will be applying for any available dollars, to help landowners install best management practices on their property, due to the requests by far exceeding the cost-share allocation.

Project estimates exceed \$350,000 for terraces, ag waste pits and structures.

Township and sections that are in the high priority water and wind erosion as follows:

Cleveland Township – all except sections 2, 3, 10

Cordova Township – sections 1, 5-8, 12-14, 17-21, 24, 25, 28-30, 31-34 & 36

Elysian Township – all sections

North Kasota Township – sections 1-4, 12, 23-27, 34-36

South Kasota Township – sections 1-3, 9-13

Kilkenny Township – all sections

Lanesburgh Township – sections 1-4, 9-15, 21-28, 33-36

Lexington Township – sections 29-31

Montgomery Township – sections 1-3, 11-14, 22-36

Ottawa Township – sections 1, 2, 11-15, 22-28, 33-36

Tyrone Township – sections 25, 35, 36

Washington Township – all sections

Waterville Township – all sections



