

ANNUAL WORK PLAN

Beltrami County
Soil & Water Conservation District
and Environmental Services Department

2013

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Beltrami County SWCD & Beltrami County ESD

In 2010, the County Board and the SWCD Board signed a cooperative agreement to share services and increase environmental conservation program delivery to the County's landowners. As a result of this agreement, the five ESD\SWCD staff will work on implementing the missions of the SWCD and ESD. Many partners will work cooperatively to promote and enhance environmental conservation and natural resources stewardship in the County. The purpose of this Annual Plan is to provide direction and set measurable goals for implementing our combined programs in 2013.

Strategic Aligned Management Identified Objectives:

1. Maintain and Improve the Water Quality of Beltrami County's Lakes and Streams

Key Performance Indicators:

Short Term

- Increase the number of Citizen Lake Monitors

Long Term

- Increase the number of County Lakes that meet the complete Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Water Monitoring requirement
- Less than 5% of County Lakes are listed as impaired waters
- Develop new Best Management Practices for Shoreline Properties

2. Provide Environmental Conservation Services to Landowners

Key Performance Indicators:

- Implement a new open enrollment program for cost share in 2013
- Utilize 100% cost share dollars for projects on the ground
- Utilize other partners funding resources for Environmental Conservation Projects
- Promote the environmental conservation services and practices available.

Objective 1 – Maintain and Improve the Water Quality of Beltrami County’s Lakes and Streams

Strategic Initiatives:

1. Provide information to the County Board and the SWCD Board to assist them in identifying specific locations or areas of water quality management priorities.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
2. Work to secure administrative arrangements with the incorporated municipalities in Beltrami County, to serve as their Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) local government unit for administering the rules of the WCA, and County Wetland Ordinance. Provide wetland information and assistance.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
Partners: BWSR, County Municipalities
3. Develop a process for establishing suitable sites for the land application of septage.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
4. Provide staff support to organizations promoting water quality through local water enhancement efforts. Groups include, but are not limited to, the Beltrami County Lakes and Rivers Association (BCLARA), the Turtle River Watershed Association, Beltrami County lakeshore owners associations, Red Lake Watershed District, Red Lake Band of Ojibwe, and the Upper Mississippi Watershed Foundation.
Responsible Parties: Brent,
5. Promote the citizen-based resources monitoring program and expand the geographic coverage of the programs.
Responsible Parties: Brent,
Partners: BWSR, MPCA, DNR
6. Pursue understanding of the impaired waters designation for the Upper Mississippi River and its implications to the water quality of downstream waters (Lake Irving and Lake Bemidji) to be in a better position to receive funding for projects which will address the impairment.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
Partners: MPCA, BWSR, SWCD Board, MHB
7. Pursue a resource management partnership role in the Mud and Moose Rivers dissolved oxygen impairment and streambank stabilization effort.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
Partners: RLWD, NRCS, BWSR, DNR, SWCD Board
8. Identify, locate, and quantify sites on the Mississippi River and Schoolcraft River where erosion and sedimentation are currently degrading water quality.
Responsible Parties: Brent,
Partners: MHB

9. Utilize the Local Work Group (SWCD Supervisors, staff, and NRCS) process to prioritize resource concerns.
Responsible Parties: Bill
Partners: SWCD Board, NRCS, DNR

10. Encourage implementation of an educational component for all public projects.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, , Kathy, Mary
Partners: Beltrami County, SWCD Board

11. Educate and inform the SWCD Board and the County Board about current legislation and programs relating to natural resources.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
Partners: SWCD Board, BWSR, MASWCD

12. Communicate with elected legislators about local resource management needs and impacts of proposed legislation.
Responsible Parties: Bill
Partners: Beltrami County, SWCD Board

13. Build an effective website for educating the public about natural resources.
Responsible Parties: Bill

14. Establish a Standard Operating Procedure for the application, encumbering, and allocation of State Cost-share funds.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill, Kathy, Mary
Partners: SWCD Board, BWSR

15. Create one State Cost-share pamphlet/brochure that outlines the project eligibility requirements and application process for obtaining conservation cost-share funds.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill, Kathy, Mary
Partners: SWCD Board

16. Maintain a list of natural resource concerns and special projects. Projects on this list will be completed as time and funding allow.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
Partners: Beltrami County, SWCD Board

17. Work with all possible partners to resolve natural resource concerns on the special project list. Priority will be given to the projects identified as priorities by the SWCD Board.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, , Kathy, Mary
Partners: NRCS, Beltrami County, SWCD Board, Red Lake Band, RLWD, Leech Lake Band, USACOE, BWSR, DNR, MPCA, Beltrami County Municipalities

Strategic Initiatives Staffing Commitment:

Administrative – 500 hours
Technical – 3,500 hours

Routine Initiatives:

1. Provide technical and advisory leadership to Beltrami County in implementing Beltrami County's 4th-generation Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan (CLWMP). Staff and SWCD Board will also provide leadership in updating the current CLWMP due to expire in May 2013.
Responsible Parties: SWCD Board, Bill, Brent,
2. Provide local government units in Beltrami County with technical assistance as needed to administer local ordinances and laws.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
3. Monitor fourteen groundwater observation wells for at least 8 months and make information available to decision-makers and the public.
Responsible Parties: Brent,
4. Complete the Clean Water Legacy Surface Water Assessment Grant project to collect water samples on selected lakes to identify potential water quality concerns.
Responsible Parties: Brent
5. Complete the second grant year of the Clean Water Legacy SSTS Enhancement project to improve the efficiency of Beltrami County's SSTS program, including permitting, record-keeping, technical assistance, and compliance.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill, Kathy, Mary
6. Fairly and effectively enforce Beltrami County's Ordinances through providing technical assistance to private landowners.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
7. Update Beltrami County's Shoreland Management Ordinance and Wetland Conservation Ordinance for review and recommendation by the SWCD Board and Planning Commission for County Board final approval and adoption.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,
Partners: DNR, SWCD Board, Planning Commission
8. Maintain accurate records to ensure transparency and accountability of the SWCD and ESD.
Responsible Parties: Bill
Partners: County Auditor, SWCD Board
9. Track and report activities of the SWCD and ESD for required end of the year reports such as NRBG reports, SSTS report, and DNR Shoreland report.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, , Kathy, Mary

Partners: NRCS, BWSR, DNR, SWCD Board

10. Write at least six water quality related news releases.

Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,

11. Assist citizen volunteers with the precipitation monitoring network, coordinate reporting with the Minnesota State Climatology Office, and make information available to decision-makers and the public.

Responsible Parties: Brent,

Partners: DNR, University of Minnesota

Routine Initiatives Staffing Commitment:

Administrative – 500 hours

Technical – 2,000 hours

Objective 2 – Provide Environmental Conservation Services to Landowners

Strategic Initiatives:

1. Continue to provide administrative and fiscal support to the North Central Minnesota SWCDs Joint Powers Board, the local functional mechanism for the State Non-Point Technical Engineering Assistance program.

Responsible Parties: Bill, Kathy, , Auditor/Treasurer

2. Promote available programs for landowners to implement projects and practices that improve agricultural operations while reducing nutrient loading to affected surface waters.

Responsible Parties: Brent,

Partners: NRCS, MDA

3. Promote federal programs to assist landowners to apply for resource management funding targeting riparian protection.

Responsible Parties: Brent,

Partners: NRCS, MDA, RLWD

4. Provide accountability and transparency of SWCD financial and technical support through publicizing information on a dedicated website for the benefit of landowners, and the public.

Responsible Parties: Bill

Partners: Beltrami County, SWCD Board

5. Engage in targeted educational outreach programs for citizens of Beltrami County.

Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill, Kathy, Mary

Partners: NRCS, Beltrami County, SWCD Board

6. Begin digitizing educational material such as videos and booklets for placement on the Beltrami County website.

Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent,

Strategic Initiatives Staffing Commitment:

Administrative – 200 hours

Technical – 500 hours

Routine Initiatives:

1. Provide general assistance to at least 20 landowners regarding their concerns about erosion.

Responsible Parties: Brent,

Partners: NRCS, BWSR, SWCD Board

2. Continue assistance for the Ash Utilization Project to help 20 landowners on acidic soils improve legume forage production through the MPCA-certified land application of wood ash.

Responsible Parties: Kathy

Partners: MPCA, Norboard

3. Assist 100 landowners with the Well Water Testing Program, by contracting with an independent water testing facility to test landowner's drinking water for nitrates and coliform bacteria.

Responsible Parties: Mary, Kathy

4. Promote USDA programs to assist landowners for resource management funding.

Responsible Parties: Brent,

Partners: NRCS, FSA

5. Provide assistance to at least 200 landowners with the SWCD tree program, and at least 20 landowners regarding specific planning/implementation of conservation plantings.

Responsible Parties: Kathy, Brent,

6. Promote and utilize State and Federal programs to target critical Wildlife habitat needs, provide requested technical assistance, and write three contracts with qualifying landowners.

Responsible Parties: Bill

Partners: NRCS, BWSR, SWCD Board

7. Host one SSTS workshop for professionals and property owners, and host one workshop(s) for riparian property owners.

Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill, Kathy, Mary

8. Participate and/or sponsor three youth educational activities such as the Envirothon, Water Festival, and Science Fairs.

Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill, Kathy, Mary

Partners: NRCS, Red Lake Band, MASWCD

Routine Initiatives Staffing Commitment:

Administrative – 700 hours

Technical – 2500 hours

SUMMARY

Water and soil resource management continues to grow in importance as local political and civic leaders increase their recognition of the relationship between water quality and economics. ESD\SWCD staff along with the SWCD Board and the County Board will continue to provide local leadership in addressing natural resource concerns as funds allow. A coordinated, cooperative effort with other agencies is essential to accomplishing this. Partnerships with property owners, other units of government, state agencies, and civic organizations will be pursued and utilized whenever possible.

With the new Cooperative Agreement to share services and increase environmental conservation program delivery to the County's landowners, this now presents itself with a unique opportunity for the SWCD and ESD to re-assess its ability to address anticipated future challenges, and build capacity through its staff. Both entities will embrace the County's Strategy-Aligned Management System by clearly articulating common objectives, clarifying the desired impacts, and developing initiatives that result in measurable outcomes in preserving and protecting the County's environmental resources for future generations.

Total 2013 Staffing Commitment:

Administrative – 1,900 hours

Technical – 8,500 hours

Appendix A

SPECIAL PROJECTS

In addition to the daily activities of the Beltrami County ESD/SWCD, there are special natural resources projects that we will try and address where possible. The following natural resource projects are identified as potential priorities for accomplishment in 2013 as workload and funding allows:

Mississippi River Watershed

- ❖ Lindgren Lake public access (NRM) – erosion and stormwater control
- ❖ Roglien Park shoreline stabilization (NRM) – potential Cost-share project
- ❖ Mississippi River High Banks – (NRM) – riparian erosion control and bank stabilization
- ❖ Mississippi River – complete inventory of erosion/sedimentation areas and prepare engineered design plans and cost estimates for restoration/protection
- ❖ Bemidji State Park – erosion control
- ❖ Bemidji State University – stormwater control/rain gardens
- ❖ Complete the JW Smith Project as originally envisioned

Red Lakes Watershed

- ❖ Coburn Creek streambank erosion and discharge to Blackduck Lake
- ❖ Blackduck River access north of #1 – erosion and stormwater control. Will partner with the Red Lake Band as they address the Blackduck River access immediately south of Lower Red Lake (potential financial partners identified are State Cost-share, RLGf, RLWD)
- ❖ Mud and Moose Rivers dissolved oxygen impairments and the potentially related Moose River Road structural issues/erosion concerns
- ❖ Little Buzzle Lake public access (NRM) – erosion and stormwater control

Additional Projects

Additional projects were identified as potential partnership opportunities with the Red Lake Band of Chippewa, and ESD/SWCD staff will provide technical assistance with them as workload, funding, and partnership participation allows. They are not prioritized.

- Shoreline restorations at lake accesses using NRCS practice standards (8 to 12 sites identified)
- Mud River restoration – dam removal and stream restoration
- Kinney Lake access restoration (EQIP \$ funded)
- Blackduck River and/or Battle River watershed projects (strong NRCS involvement for program funds; direct water quality impacts preferable)