

ANNUAL WORK PLAN

Beltrami County
Soil & Water Conservation District
and Environmental Services Department

2014

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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 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 2014.

Objectives:

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

Key Performance Indicators:

Short Term

- Increase the number of Citizen Lake Monitors
- Complete production & installation of Hwy. 197 Lake Bemidji south shore interpretative signs
- Complete vegetative maintenance of J.W. Smith Biomes & storm-water basin projects

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

2. Provide Environmental Conservation Services to Landowners

Key Performance Indicators:

- Implement a new open enrollment program for cost share in 2014
- Utilize 100% of cost share project & administration funds
- Utilize other funding resources for Environmental Conservation Projects
- Promote environmental conservation services and practices available

3. Work to address Non-Native Vegetation and Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

- MN Department of Agriculture Noxious Weed Program
 - Perform duties required as county designee
 - Provide technical assistance to township & municipality designated weed inspector
 - Provide annual training for local weed inspectors in conjunction with our partners – MDOT, Beltrami County NRM / Highway Departments, MDNR, MDA, Chippewa Forest
- MN Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)
 - Submit Level 1 grant application to undertaken watercraft inspections on following lakes: Bemidji, Irving, Beltrami, Big Lake

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

Strategic Initiatives:

1. Provide information to the County and SWCD Boards to assist them in identifying specific locations or areas of water quality management priorities.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill B.
2. Work to secure administrative arrangements with incorporated municipalities to serve as their Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) administrator and County Wetland Ordinance. Provide wetland information and assistance.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill P.
Partners: BWSR, Municipalities
3. Provide support to organizations promoting water quality through local water enhancement efforts. Groups include, but are not limited to, such as the Beltrami County Lakes and Rivers Association (BCLARA), Turtle River Watershed Association, lakeshore owners associations, Red Lake Watershed District, Red Lake Band of Ojibwe DNR, and the Mississippi Headwaters Board.
Responsible Parties: Brent, Bill, Bill B.
Partners: MPCA
4. Identify, locate, and quantify sites on the Mississippi River and Schoolcraft River where erosion and sedimentation are currently degrading water quality.
Responsible Parties: Brent, Bill B.
Partners: MHB, BWSR, MPCA
5. Utilize the Local Work Group (SWCD supervisors, staff, and NRCS) process to prioritize resource concerns.
Responsible Parties: Bill P.
Partners: SWCD Board, NRCS, DNR

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

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

8. Incorporate revised SWCD Build an effective website page for educating the public about natural resources into the county website.
Responsible Parties: Bill B., Brent, County Administration

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

10. Produce a State Cost-share pamphlet/brochure that outlines project eligibility requirements and application process.
Responsible Parties: Staff
Partners: SWCD Board, BWSR

11. Maintain a list of natural resource concerns and potential special projects. Projects on this list will be completed as time and funding allow.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill P.
Partners: County & SWCD Boards, NRCS, other natural resource agencies

12. Address natural resource concerns on the special project list with Priority given to projects identified as priorities by the SWCD Board.
Responsible Parties: Staff
Partners: NRCS, Beltrami County, SWCD Board, Red Lake Band, RLWD, Leech Lake Band, USACOE, BWSR, DNR, MPCA, Municipalities

13. Participate and coordinate in the One Water, One Plan (1W1P) initiative in the Thief River Watershed.

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). Provide leadership in updating the current CLWMP due to expire in May 2017.
Responsible Parties: SWCD Board, Bill P., Bill B., Brent
2. Provide local government units with technical assistance as needed to administer local ordinances and laws.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill P.
3. Monitor fourteen groundwater observation wells and upload to database per DNR Ob-well contract. Make information available to decision-makers and the public.
Responsible Parties: Brent & Bill B.
4. Complete the Clean Water Legacy Surface Water Assessment Grant project final reporting.
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: Staff
6. Fairly and effectively enforce Beltrami County's Ordinances through providing technical assistance to private landowners and businesses.
Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill P.
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, Bill P.
Partners: DNR, SWCD Board, Planning Commission
8. Maintain accurate records to ensure transparency and accountability of the SWCD and ESD.
Responsible Parties: Staff
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: Staff
Partners: NRCS, BWSR, DNR, SWCD Board, MPCA

10. Write at least six water quality related news releases for publication in county newsletter and local newspapers.

Responsible Parties: Bill, Brent, Bill P.

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: Staff

Partners: DNR, University of Minnesota, Local Volunteers

Routine Initiatives Staffing Commitment:

Administrative – 500 hours

Technical – 2,000 hours

Objective 2 – Provide Environmental Conservation Services to Landowners

Strategic Initiatives:

1. 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: Host Manager, Staff, 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, Bill B., Bill P.

Partners: NRCS, MDA, Red Lake DNR, local agricultural producer organizations / associations

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

Responsible Parties: Brent, Bill B., Bill P.

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 P.

Partners: County Auditor Office, SWCD Board

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, Bill B. Bill P.
Partners: NRCS, BWSR, SWCD Board
2. Continue assistance for the Wood Ash Utilization Project to help approximately 20 landowners on acidic soils improve legume forage production through the MPCA-certified land application of wood ash.
Responsible Parties: Kathy
Partners: MPCA, Nor-Board
3. Continue as pickup/drop off site for contract-independent water testing facility to test drinking water for nitrates, coliform bacteria, and other elements.
Responsible Parties: Mary, Kathy
4. Promote USDA programs to assist landowners with securing resource management funding to address priority natural resource concerns.
Responsible Parties: Brent, Bill B. Bill P.
Partners: NRCS, FSA
5. Provide assistance to at least 200 landowners with the SWCD tree program.
Responsible Parties: Staff
6. Host SSTS workshop(s) for contractors, realtors, and property owners. Host workshop(s) for lakeshore property owners.
Responsible Parties: Staff
7. Participate and/or sponsor three youth educational activities such as the Envirothon, Water Festival, and Science Fairs.
Responsible Parties: Staff
Partners: NRCS, Red Lake Band, MASWCD, ISD 31

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. Staff along with the SWCD and County Boards 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 affords both the opportunity to re-assess and address anticipated and unexpected future challenges.

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

- ❖ 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
- ❖ Work with ISD 31 on closing out the JW Smith Project Biomes Project
- ❖ Complete design, production, and installation of Hwy 197 south shore signage

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)
- ❖ 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
- ❖ Work with Red Lake Tribal DNR – complete stream crossing assessments inside and outside of tribal boundaries to promote sturgeon spawning