

# NORTHLAND CONSERVATION NEWS

SUMMER 2010 NEWSLETTER



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**NRCS STAFF:** JAMES SCHWAB - DIST. CONSERVATIONIST AND MARK LARSON - TECHNICIAN

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A Publication of the Kittson Soil & Water Conservation District, 410 S. 5th St., Suite 106, Hallock, MN 56728-4140, Phone 218-843-2619 or 2692 and the Two Rivers Watershed District, 410 S. 5th St., Suite 112, Hallock, MN 56728-4140, Phone 218-843-3333

## AgBMP Loan Program

*by Shane Olson*

The Agricultural Best Management Practice (AgBMP) loans are available from the Kittson SWCD. The interest rate for AgBMP loans is 3%. The money is available for the purchase of Ag waste management equipment, conservation tillage equipment, septic systems, and a few other conservation related items.

Landowners in Kittson County can apply for loans by initially visiting the Kittson SWCD office to fill out an application. The application will then be reviewed by the SWCD Board of Supervisors during its monthly board meeting. Upon approval the application is delivered to Farm Credit Services or American Federal Bank in Hallock, who is also a qualified lender.

## Funding Available for Abandoned or Unused Well Sealing

*by Shane Olson*

Cost-share money is available through the Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for the sealing of abandoned or unused wells.

The Kittson SWCD reimburses landowners up to 75 percent of the cost of sealing abandoned or unused wells. This cost-share program is offered through the Kittson County Comprehensive Local Water Plan and state cost-share funds. Cost-share is available on a first-come-first-served basis.

Unused, abandoned or improperly sealed wells are potential sources of contamination to ground water, and can consequently affect nearby drinking water wells. Abandoned wells can act as channels for surface pollutants to enter ground water. Many abandoned wells also go uncovered, posing a physical threat to humans and mainly small children who could potentially fall into the open wells.

For more information on well sealing, stop by our office in the Kittson County Courthouse or call 218-843-2619, ext. 3.

## Fall Tillage for 2011 Tree Plantings

*By Shane Olson*

Just a reminder if you are interested in planting trees in the spring of 2011, be sure to get out this fall and work up those sites. Stop by this fall and winter to get on the order list before they run out.

## 2010 NW Area I Envirothon Held at Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge

**Tri County placed 1st Overall / Kittson Central placed 3rd**  
*by Shane Olson, Kittson SWCD Program Coordinator*

It was a sunny day at Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge on Wednesday, April 28th for the 17th annual Northwest Area I Envirothon.

The numbers for this year's event increased since last year as, 24 teams consisting of 114 students competed in the event. Representing Kittson County were 5 teams from Tri-County, 3 teams from Kittson Central and 2 teams from Kittson County North. Also taking part were 14 teams from Stephen-Argyle, Marshall County Central, Badger, Greenbush, Grygla and Goodridge.

### FIRST PLACE 2010 AREA I ENVIROTHON

Tri County's team of Adam Wojciechowski, Sabrina Budziszewski, Austin Braget, Tony Sang and Mitch Braget along with Instructor Gary Taylor placed 1st at the 2010 NW Area I Envirothon at Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge.



At the end of the day, all of the team's points were tallied and a team from Tri-County placed 1st, a team from Grygla placed 2nd; and a team from Kittson Central placed 3rd. Highlighting the event the 3rd place team from Kittson Central placed 1st in the Oral Presentation station. Those winning teams received trophies, medallions, sweat-shirts and a trip to the State Envirothon competition, which was held on May 17th at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest Camp at Deerwood, MN.

Special thanks goes out to the Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge and their staff for hosting the event. This years area sponsors for the NW Area I Envirothon includes, Kittson SWCD, Two River Watershed District, Joe River Watershed District, Halma-Lake Bronson American Legion Post #315, Cenex-Farmers Union Oil of Lake Bronson, Kennedy Jaycees, Johnson Oil Co-Hallock, American Federal Bank-Hallock, Ag Country Farm Credit Services-Hallock, Two River Watershed District, Joe River Watershed District, Kennedy VFW, Hallock Eagles, Central Boiler, Inc-Greenbush, Thrivent Lutheran Hallock, Lancaster Lions, Lake Bronson Lions, Karlstad Lions, D & D Commodities, the Northern Plains Potato Growers Association and the North Red River Chapter of the Minnesota Deer hunters Association.

(Continued on next page)



Kittson Central's team of Logan Johnson, Anna Christenson, Dean Lipinski, Brita Christenson, Briana Nupdal and Instructor Kim Jones placed 3rd overall at the 2010 NW Area I Envirothon. They placed 1st overall for the oral presentation problem, which scores heavily for the overall total and they are each pictured with individual trophies for their accomplishment.

Thank you again for your help in yet making another successful event. Comments from both students and teachers reflect that this event is an excellent learning opportunity. Kittson Soil & Water Conservation District, speaking for the Northwest Area I Envirothon Committee, appreciates your support for this event.

## Planting Trees With WHIP

*By Jim Schwab*

The wildlife habitat incentives program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop or improve wildlife habitat on their land. For example, if a landowner wants to plant an acre of trees. The WHIP program can pay a flat rate of \$22.08 per acre for site preparation, \$1.30 per tree (transplants) planted, \$3.62 per tree tube installed and \$1.68 per tree matt installed. WHIP does not provide rental income or easement purchase payments. Almost any type of land is eligible; Grassland, woodland, pastureland, wetlands, streams and agricultural or non-agricultural land. Parcels not eligible are lands that are currently under some other state or federal program.

If interested contact our office at 218-843-2619.

## Address Corrections Very Important

After several years with a new address, we are still receiving mail addressed to our old post office box address. The Kittson SWCD and the Two Rivers Watershed District have con-

lresses to physical addresses in the Courthouse. The Kittson trictus new address is 410 S. 5th St, Suite 106, Hallock, MN, Watershed District's new address is 410 S. 5th St, Suite 112,

If you have a new address to provide us contact: Shane.olson@mn.nacdnet.net . We will share it with the Farm Service Agency office, if you request to do so.



## Conservation Activities With EQIP

By Jim Schwab

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is another voluntary USDA program which provides financial assistance to install or apply conservation practices such as grassed water ways, filter strips, erosion control structures, well sealing and shelterbelt renovations. Other practices such as rotational grazing can include different components of the practice. Some components included under rotational grazing are permanent fencing, complete watering systems and pasture plantings. In addition, incentive payments can be made for up to three years to encourage prescribed grazing, crop residue management, no-till seeding, cover crop seeding and incorporating hay into current crop rotations. If interested contact or office at 218-843-2619.

## Saline Soils and CRP

By Jim Schwab

Kittson County has the highest number of acres of saline soils in the state of Minnesota. The main reason is the high water table within soils with high sodium content. As the water table rises it carries soluble salts to the surface or just below the surface. As the water table drops and as evaporation and transpiration by plants occur the salts remain at the surface and in the root zone of the soils. Therefore you will have poor to zero plant growth.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) continuously takes applications for these areas with high saline soils for enrollment into the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP). To be eligible the area must have been cropped 4 out of 6 years between 2002 and 2007 and must be considered saline. The Natural Resource Conservation Service will do the salinity testing to determine if the area is considered saline. Once enrolled, the acres designated will be seeded to a mix of salt tolerant grasses. The maximum acreage enrolled is 50 acres per tract. Rental rates for a 10 year contract will be from \$40.00 to \$50.00 per acre per year (depending on the soil types) and with the Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) and CRP cost-share producers may receive up to 90% reimbursement of the eligible cost incurred in practice establishment. Any landowner or operators interested in this program please call the NRCS office in Hallock (218-843-2619 ext 3) for all the details.

## Go The Extra Mile With CSP

By Mark Larson

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that encourages producers to maintain the conservation activities they practice on their operation currently and to adopt additional practices to enhance the conservation they put on the land. Producers interested in CSP can apply to enroll Cropland, Pastureland, and Forestland. CSP is a 5-year program that looks at the entire farm operation. The operation is evaluated and receives points for existing activities and scores more points for enhancements that are selected and scheduled according to land use. The payment rate for CSP is determined after the application and ranking period. CSP is under continuous signup so if you are interested in learning more about the program call or stop in and visit. (218-843-2619)

## A Conservation Legacy Reaching Back to 1935

By Mark Larson

2010 marks the 75th anniversary of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the beginning of the federal commitment to conserving natural resources on private lands. Originally established by Congress in 1935 as the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), NRCS has expanded to become a conservation leader for all natural resources, ensuring private lands are conserved, restored, and more resilient to environmental challenges. NRCS works with landowners through conservation planning and assistance designed to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals that result in productive lands and healthy ecosystems. Minnesota has been a leading state in our nation when it comes to conservation. In the words of the first NRCS Chief, Hugh Hammond Bennett – "If we take care of the land, it will take care of us."

## 2010 Rainfall Totals – Kittson County

The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District works with the Minnesota State Climatology Network in St. Paul to gather rainfall data around Kittson County. The data is used to show long term trends in weather patterns and record baseline rain amounts for the entire state. Now is a table showing the township and section of the current rainfall monitors (25 in all) and the rainfall that was collected at that site. The rainfall is recorded in inches. Thanks to the current and past rain gauge monitors. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated.

Township & Section	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Total
Percy 31 - R. Benson	NR	6.82	NR					6.82
Spring Brook 25 - J. Dagen	1.26	6.20	3.16	3.47				14.09
Hill 5 - B. Dykuis	2.66	6.94	3.09					12.69
Poppleton 9 - M. Larson	1.43	8.08	4.10	5.80				19.41
Thompson 35 - P. Gillie	1.24	7.43	3.58	3.46				15.71
Svea 25 - G. Grundstrom	1.55	6.05	4.70					12.30
St Vincent 2 - A. Hughes	1.68	11.44	3.64					16.76
Percy 14 - A. Johnson	NR	7.83	3.27	5.44				16.54
Pelan 34 - D. Johnson	NR	NR	NR					0.00
Granville 13 - B. Laude	1.76	10.45	6.18	6.58				24.97
North Red River 9 - B. Lindgard	1.62	6.58	3.92					12.12
Thompson 12 - Markit Landöll	1.16	5.31	7.32	3.89				17.68
Tegner 31 - G. Mitziga	1.56	6.03	5.66					13.25
Teien 12 - C. Mortenson	1.44	6.40	5.12	3.29				16.25
Hampden 13 - CW Nyegaard	1.49	8.40	4.03					13.92
Norway 21 - D. Olson	0.10	7.37	3.32	4.57				15.36
Jupiter 18 - R. Petersen	1.63	7.05	3.99	4.21				16.88
Richardville 10 - J. Peterson	1.52	8.28	6.41	5.30				21.51
Skane 5 - M. Such	1.45	7.40	4.46	2.84				16.15
Deerwood 3 - W. Voth	1.16	6.70	4.48	4.75				17.09
St. Vincent 24 - N. Wiese	1.77	8.86	3.56	4.74				18.93
St. Joseph 4 - J. Wilebski	1.60	10.77	6.17	3.98				24.52
Hallock 13 - Two River Watershed	1.16	8.12	3.79	4.04				17.11
Deerwood 13 - R. Anderson	NR	NR	NR					0.00
Caribou 33 - L. Olson	NR	NR	NR	*1.30*				1.30
Average for the Rainfall Monitors	1.46	7.66	4.57	4.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.84

NR = No Report for this month submitted.

\*Received Rain Gauge on 7/22/2010\*



### Legend

- SWCD Rainfall Monitoring
- Kittson County Townships
- Kittson County Highways

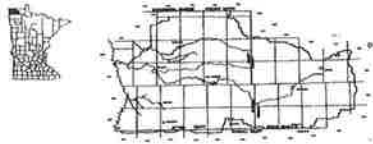


# Two Rivers Watershed District News

In Roseau, Kittson & Marshall Counties

Summer 2010

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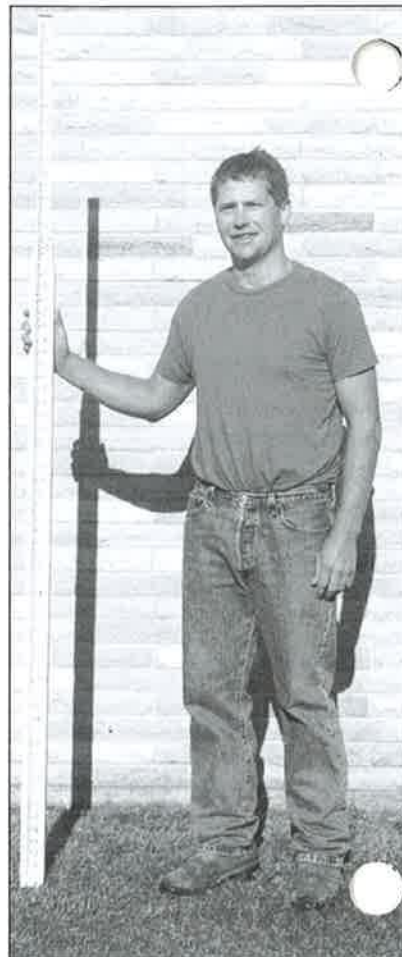


## TRWD Welcomes New Board & Staff Members

In the past several months, a couple of new faces have turned up at the Two Rivers Watershed District. One new Board member has been appointed by the Kittson County Commissioners, and also this past spring the District hired a new District Technician.

Darrel Johnson from rural Hallock was appointed to the Board of Managers to replace Jerod Hanson. He assumed duties on March 3, 2010. Darrel and his brother Peter own and operate a family farm located in Hallock, Skane, and South Red River Townships in Kittson County. He and his wife Jodi have three children. The District welcomes Darrel to the Board of Managers and looks forward to working with him.

Matt Thompson, was hired as the new technician at the Two River Watershed District and began his duties in March 2010. He currently lives in Karlstad with his wife Melissa, who is an English teacher and head volleyball coach at Tri-County Schools, and their two daughters, Madison (15) and McKenzie (12). His parents are Roger and Sharon Thompson of Lake Bronson. His main interests outside of work are deer hunting and golf. Matt went back to college at the age of 34 and will complete his degree in Natural Resource Management at the University of Minnesota Crookston this fall. He looks forward to meeting and working with everyone in the Two River Watershed District.



Matt Thompson

## Big Swamp Project Work Team focuses on Badger Creek

By Dan Money

As reported in the last issue of Northland Conservation News, the TRWD has assembled a Project Work Team to look at flooding issues and solutions in the area of State Ditch #95. The name for this group is the Big Swamp Project Work Team (BSPWT), and it is comprised of people representing local landowners, townships, Roseau and Kittson Counties, conservation groups, and various state and federal agencies.

The BSPWT is studying the possibility of locating one or more impoundments either upstream or downstream from the City of Badger, MN. The idea is to create an impoundment similar to the District's Ross #7 impoundment, which is located on Skunk Creek just northeast of Badger. A new impoundment would be designed to store floodwaters that currently cause damages in the Badger Creek watershed, and downstream west all the way to the county line.

Picking a site that works for flood control is a key part of the process. Not only does it need to have the right topography with inlets and outlets, but it also needs to be in an area acceptable to local residents. As with the Ross Impoundment, the idea would be for it to be a "dry impoundment", meaning it would be drained dry during times of non flooding. This operating plan also would lend itself for the land to be rented out for hay or limited cash crops.

The BSPWT has discussed several locations for a potential impoundment, and welcomes public input to this process. Currently the team has decided to focus efforts on locations upstream of the City of Badger. The idea is to provide multiple benefits potentially for several systems, including State Ditch 95, State Ditch 91, and the City of Badger.

For more information on this process or to be placed on the meeting mailing list, please call the District office at 218-843-3333.

## Springbrook PL 566 Project Progresses

District Technician Matt Thompson

The Springbrook PL 566 project is one step closer to becoming a reality. This project is a flood control and ag drainage project located in downstream from Kittson County Ditch #10 and upstream from Judicial Ditch #10, in Springbrook and Davis Townships of Kittson County. The project components include the construction of set back levies along an existing watercourse, establishment of a legal drainage system, stream bank stabilization and erosion control, cleanout of the watercourse where necessary, installation of side water inlets, and establishment of a grass buffer.

The project is sponsored locally by the Two Rivers Watershed District, City of Karlstad, Kittson SWCD, and Springbrook Township. The local sponsors have applied through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for funding and assistance. As a part of the process, the NRCS has completed a preliminary plan and environmental assessment, which then needed to go on a 30 day public review and comment period. This has now been completed, and the project will now be forwarded to the NRCS national office to be authorized for funding and implementation.

If all goes well, the District is hopeful that the project could be constructed beginning in 2011.

# Kittson County SWCD

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## Comprehensive Local Water Management

*By Darren Carlson*

Kittson County actively participates in the management of local water resources through a Comprehensive Local Water Plan (CLWP). The first Kittson County Water Plan was established and completed in 1990 and has been updated three times since then; 1995, 2003 and most recently in 2010. Usually it is updated every 5 - 7 years so the plan is up for revision in 2015. Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 110B allows counties to identify water related issues†through the working relationship with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). The County receives state funding through a Natural Resource Block Grant (NRBG) provided by†BWSR to implement strategies and work items identified in the Water Plan.

### Purpose

The purpose of this program is to protect water resources through the adoption and implementation of local water management plans that are based on local priorities. The following are local priorities and objectives for Kittson County:

- **Land Use** — Reduce erosion and sedimentation in Kittson County through enforcement of existing regulations, use of existing programs and development of new programs.
- **Surface Water** — Provide for protection of all surface waters in Kittson County.
- **Groundwater** — Provide for protection of ground waters in Kittson Co.

To achieve the above objectives, the following are just a few of the many goals the CLWP has in place:

- Install grass filter strips adjacent to eligible surface waters.
- Install field windbreaks, living snow fences, and farmstead shelterbelts.
- Locate erosion problems, inventory and promote best management practices (BMP) such as side inlets, streambank stabilizations and grade stabilization structures.
- Continue with the Kittson SWCD abandoned well sealing program.

These are just a few of the goals stated in the CLWP. In most cases there is potential funding/ share for the above and other practices. Contact the Kittson SWCD if the CLWP can work for you.