

## Kittson County SWCD

410 So. 5th St., Suite 106  
Hallock, Minnesota 56728-4140  
218-843-2619, ext. 3

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## ***Kittson SWCD Website***

***Check us out at: [www.nwmnswcd.org](http://www.nwmnswcd.org)***

***Check us out! We are on the Web!***

The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has created a website in cooperation with fifteen other northwest Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The website is regularly updated with new information and photos added monthly.

***Check it out!***



# Installing, Modifying, and/or Maintaining Drainage Systems

By Kelly Turgeon, FSA Administrator

## Producers and Landowners

In preparing your future planting plans, many producers are considering the need for installing new tile and/or expanding existing drainage systems. As your drainage plans are being developed you should also plan on stopping by your local Farm Service Agency to update your AD-1026 form, which is also known as the "Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Certification."

By updating this form, a referral will be sent to NRCS, who will provide you with a certified wetland determination for the fields where drainage is planned. USDA requires that farmers self-certify their compliance with the wetland conservation provisions, which includes disclosing all new drainage plans that have not been previously evaluated by NRCS. The USDA wetland conservation provisions do not require that farmers receive approval prior to undertaking drainage activities. However, an up-to-date certified wetland determination issued by NRCS will provide the most accurate information on the location of protected wetland areas. This information will allow producers to make the most informed decision when moving forward on a drainage system. USDA has no authority to delay or shut down drainage activity. Participating farmers are responsible to limit their drainage activities to insure protected wetland areas are not adversely impacted.

Producers are encouraged to update their AD-1026 as early as possible to get the process started. They are also encouraged to provide information on all prior drainage activity (ditching and tiling) in the fields where a certified wetland determination will be completed. NRCS's ability to provide a timely response to your drainage plans will depend on the number of outstanding requests received.

Producers who choose to install new and/or modify existing drainage systems 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 land the producer operates. These provisions are intended to reduce soil loss due to wind and water erosion, protect the nation's long-term capacity to produce food and fiber, reduce sedimentation and improve water quality, and to assist in preserving the functions and values of the nation's wetlands.

## Some frequently asked questions regarding wetland compliance include:

### Q1) What is the policy on maintaining existing drains?

The scope and effect of the drainage system as it existed on December 23, 1985, may be maintained in most cases. This means that tile may be repaired and ditches may be cleaned as long as no added drainage capacity is achieved. Please contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office for a copy of the "Drain Maintenance and Tiling Fact Sheet" for further information.

### Q2) What activities could impact compliance?

Some examples are land clearing, filling, leveling, excavation, dredging, stump removal, removal of woody vegetation, creating or improving a drainage system, installing tiling systems, and significantly changing crop rotations on HEL fields.

### Q3) What is a Certified Wetland Determination?

NRCS Certified Wetland Determinations consist of an offsite evaluation of the land using slides and aerial imagery, as well as an onsite evaluation. In order to qualify as a "wetland," three criteria must be met: 1) hydric soils, 2) hydrophytic vegetation, and 3) hydrology. Please note, wetland determinations done by the NRCS prior to July 1996, are not adequate for compliance

determinations. Only NRCS Certified Wetland Determinations dated July 1996, or later can be used reliably. The majority of wetland determinations issued prior to July 1996 in Kittson County are considered "official" determinations not "certified determinations". The "official" determinations are not adequate for compliance determinations.

### Q4) What if I start my drainage project before a Certified Wetland Determination is completed?

You have the right to conduct drainage prior to receiving a Certified Wetland Determination; however, you do so at your own risk. When USDA identifies that a wetland violation has occurred, the person responsible for converting the wetland is at risk to lose USDA benefits for their entire farm operation, dating back to the time when the wetland was altered. If the drainage activity which resulted in the wetland violation was unintentional the participant can request that FSA grant Good Faith. In order for FSA to approve Good Faith the person responsible for the wetland violation must agree to restore or mitigate the converted wetland area. These actions will either restore or replace the wetland values that were altered through drainage. FSA deals with requests for Good Faith on a site specific basis.

### Q5) What if I chose to stay out of USDA programs can I install drainage improvements on any land I own?

The USDA wetland conservation provisions only apply to USDA participants. However, if you chose to become a non-participant, drain wetlands and in future years seek reinstatement into USDA farm programs you will likely need to restore or mitigate all converted wetland sites.

And, you need to be aware that the State of Minnesota also has jurisdiction which restricts drainage activities within wetland areas as defined by the Minnesota Wetlands Conservation Act (WCA). This state law protects many of the same wetland areas protected under the USDA provisions. For more information you should consult your local government entity charged with enforcing the WCA wetland provisions.

### Q6) So, there are no cattails, so it's not a wetland, right?

Wrong. There are several different types of wetlands that are not open water marshes.

### Q7) Is a wetland always wet?

No. Some wetland types may never have standing water, but water is near enough to the surface for a long enough period of time to support wetland plants and create wetland soils.

### Q8) What is "Wetland Mitigation?"

Mitigation means compensating for the wetland loss that has occurred by restoring, enhancing, or creating a wetland in a different location. Some important things to note concerning mitigation are a) the new site must be equal in acreage and function to the converted wetland and b) the new site must not already be classified as a wetland, unless it is labeled as a farmable wetland, in which case the mitigation plan will require the open surface drain to be plugged. NRCS can provide further information on wetland mitigation.

**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 conduction land clearing or drainage projects.**

Species	Approximate Size of tree stock	Price Per 25 Trees	Number Needed ex. 25, 50, etc.	Total Amount
<b>DECIDUOUS</b>	<b>TREES</b>	<b>AND</b>	<b>SHRUBS</b>	<b>CONTINUED</b>
Juneberry (Serviceberry)	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Lilac, Common Purple	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Maple, Amur	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Maple, Silver	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Nannyberry	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Oak, Bur	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Paper Birch	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Plum, American	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Poplar, Norway	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Willow, Flame	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
<b>Tree Protection</b>				
4 foot Tree Pro Protector	Individual	\$3.00		
3 foot Tree Pro Protector	Individual	\$2.25		
3 X 3 Fabric Tree Mats	Individual	\$1.75		
<b>Tree Marking Materials</b>				
2 1/2 Feet Flags	Bundle of 100	\$13.50		
4 Feet Wooden Lath	Bundle of 50	\$23.00		
	<b>Make Checks Payable to Kittson SWCD</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$</b>

The Kittson SWCD has a tree planter to rent for the upcoming tree planting season. Cost is 25 cents per tree planted if the driver of the tractor is provided or 50 cents per tree if the SWCD staff has to drive. A minimum fee of \$50.00 for all tree plantings. The Kittson SWCD will only plant properly prepared sites that are ready the first week of May. If you have questions regarding the preparation of your site or about the tree program, please contact Darren Carlson at the Kittson SWCD. Phone number is 218-843-2619 Ext. 3.

Orders cannot be cancelled after January 27, 2012.

**Ask us about other programs the Kittson SWCD offers!**



**Orders are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.**

**Tree orders will be available for pickup beginning of May 2012.**

**Letters/phone calls will be made as soon as we know when the trees will be here.**

**PLEASE RETURN ORDER FORM AND FULL PAYMENT TO:**

**Tree Program  
Kittson SWCD  
410 South 5th Street  
Suite 106  
Hallock MN 56728**

## Kittson SWCD Tree Order Form 2012

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

County:

E-Mail Address:

*All bundles contain 25 bareroot trees or shrubs except where noted! Prices and sizes subject to change due to Nursery availability.*

Species	Approximate Size of tree stock	Price Per Pot	Number Needed (Sold Individually)	Total Amount
<b>POTTED CONIFERS</b>				
Black Hills Spruce	15" - 18"	\$7.00		
Colorado Blue Spruce	15" - 18"	\$7.00		
Scotch Pine	15" - 18"	\$7.00		
<b>CONIFERS</b>	<b>TREES</b>	<b>Price Per 25 Trees</b>	<b>Number Needed ex. 25, 50, etc.</b>	
Black Hills Spruce	8" - 15"	\$34.00		
Colorado Blue Spruce	8" - 15"	\$34.00		
Scotch Pine	8" - 15"	\$34.00		
White Spruce	8" - 15"	\$34.00		
<b>DECIDUOUS TREES</b>	<b>AND SHRUBS</b>	<b>Price Per 25 Trees</b>	<b>Number Needed ex. 25, 50, etc.</b>	
Apricot (Hardy)	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Ash, Green	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Aspen, Quacking	2' - 3'	\$47.00		
Buffaloberry, Silver	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Cherry, Nanking	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Cherry, Pin	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Chokeberry, Black	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Cotoneaster	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Cottonwood, Common	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Cottonwood, Siouxland	12" - 24"	\$27.00		
Crabapple, Red Splendor	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Cranberry, Highbush	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Currant, Golden	18" - 24"	\$27.00		
Dogwood, Redosier	12" - 24"	\$27.00		





# Two Rivers Watershed District News

*In Roseau, Kittson & Marshall Counties*



## 2011 Projects Wrap-Up!

*By Dan Money*

The 2011 construction season has officially come to a close, and the Two Rivers Watershed District can report excellent progress on several ditch maintenance projects. The District is the "ditch authority" for 61.7 miles of legal ditch under the Ditch Law - MN Statute 103E, and for another 30.2 miles of legal ditch under the Watershed Law - MN Statute 103D. As the ditch authority, the District is charged with inspecting, maintaining, and repairing any damages to these systems. Each year every mile of ditch is visually inspected for obstructions like beaver dams, sediment plugs, cattail, and brush. In addition, all ditches are on a rotating schedule to be surveyed at a minimum of once every 5 years. The inspections and surveys are used to prepare a maintenance plan for each ditch and to implement cleaning, spraying, or other activities.

### Below is a listing of the work completed in 2011:

- Kittson County Ditch #7: A survey of 6.2 miles revealed that about 4 miles was filled in with sediment. Laudal Construction was hired to clean out the 4 miles of ditch, and this work was completed in August. In addition, the benefitted area of the ditch was re-determined as dictated under Minnesota Statutes.
- Kittson County Ditch #10: A survey of 6.5 miles was completed, and this showed that about 1 to 1.5 miles of ditch needs to be cleaned. This work will be completed in 2012.
- Judicial Ditch #3: A survey was completed on 5.3 miles, and most of the ditch was cleaned of sediment. The work was completed by D.R. Blawat Construction.
- Judicial Ditch #10, Branch B: A survey completed in 2010 revealed that most of the ditch has excess sediment. Due to a lack of funding in the ditch fund, the Board of Managers made the determination to complete at least 3 miles per year until the ditch is finished. Therefore, 3.5 miles was done in 2010, and another 3 miles was done this year, working from the outlet to the upstream end. This will continue for the next few years until completed.
- Roseau County Ditch #4: 7.8 miles of ditch was surveyed this past summer, and the survey shows that a cleanout is needed. This work will be done during 2012.
- Soler 4: 5 miles of ditch were surveyed and about 1 to 2 miles will be cleaned in 2012.

### Other:

- One ring dike was designed, bid, and constructed in 2011 for a private landowner under the federal EQIP program.
- Numerous beaver dams were removed from several ditch systems, and a beaver bounty was paid to individuals who were contacted to remove problem beavers.

74 permit applications were reviewed by the District for various works of improvement. A permit is required by the District for ditching, diking, culvert installation or alteration, water appropriation, tile drainage, road building, and any other project which may affect the quantity or quality of water resource.

## CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program)

*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)

## Plant A New Shelterbelt Next Spring

*By Mark Larson*

The so-called dust bowl days of the 1930s prompted land management practices such as farmstead shelterbelts to conserve soil resources. Today, a renewed interest in the restoration of farmstead shelterbelts exists. A well designed shelterbelt should contain a combination of shrubs and trees. Placement is primarily on the north and west sides of farmsteads to block the prevailing winds. Some benefits associated with Shelterbelts include; home energy conservation, snow control, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, air filtering and soil conservation.

### A successful project requires a few basic steps:

- Selection and ordering planting stock, Kittson SWCD can assist you in selecting species preferred for these plantings. Ordering trees early will ensure that you receive the best planting stock for the season.
- Proper preparation of planting site, Summer Fallowing is recommended to help produce a weed free, loose seedbed. If a producer is interested in using the SWCD tree planter the site must be worked up prior to planting. When hand planting is preferred, the site should be mowed to reduce competition.
- Suitable planting techniques, the best time to plant is right after the frost has left the ground in the spring, planting stock should arrive during this critical time. Before planting, stake out rows for proper location and spacing. Trees should be planted at the proper depth and the stock must be kept moist until it is in the ground.
- Proper care after planting, the work of planning the shelterbelt, ordering trees and getting the trees in the ground is wasted if you are not committed to controlling weeds and watering your new shelterbelt.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has a CRP program CP-16A Farmstead Shelterbelts that will provide up to 90% cost share and annual payments for a 15 year contract on acres that are currently cropland. If you're interested in a shelterbelt around your home or farmstead please stop in the conservation office and learn more about financial assistance that may be available to establish and maintain a well functioning shelterbelt.

## Address Corrections

If you have a new address, would like to receive this newsletter or other mailings by email please contact: [Darren.Carlson@mn.nacdn.net](mailto:Darren.Carlson@mn.nacdn.net). We will share it with the Farm Service Agency office, if you request to do so.

# Two Rivers Watershed District News

## In Roseau, Kittson & Marshall Counties



Winter 2011

410 5th St. S., Suite 112, Hallock, MN 56728 • Phone 218-843-3333 • Fax 218-843-2020 • Email: [daniel.money@mn.nacdn.net](mailto:daniel.money@mn.nacdn.net)

## Olsonawski Replaces Ratzlaff On TRWD Board of Managers

By Dan Money

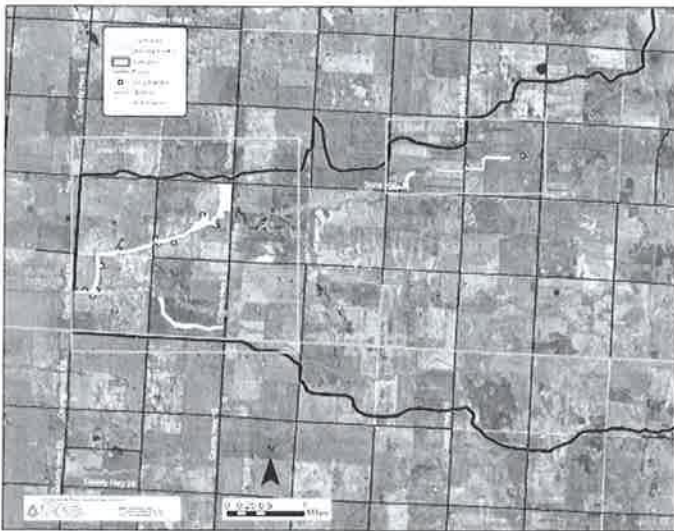
Paul Olsonawski of rural Lancaster, Minnesota was appointed by the Kittson County Commission to the Two Rivers Watershed District Board of Managers. He will fill the opening created by the resignation of Mike Ratzlaff of rural Lake Bronson. Olsonawski's term began in July 2011 and will end in October 2013. With Paul's appointment, the Board now consists of President Roger Anderson, Vice President Jon Vold, Secretary Jim Kukowski, Treasurer O'Neil

Larson, Dick Novacek, Darrel Johnson, and Olsonawski.

Olsonawski has a family farming operation located in the far north-central part of Kittson County, consisting of small grains and cattle. He is a life-long resident of Kittson County. The Two Rivers Watershed District welcomes him to the Board of Managers and looks forward his input on the Board and to working with him on water management issues!

## Springbrook PL-566 Project #10 Moving Forward

By Dan Money



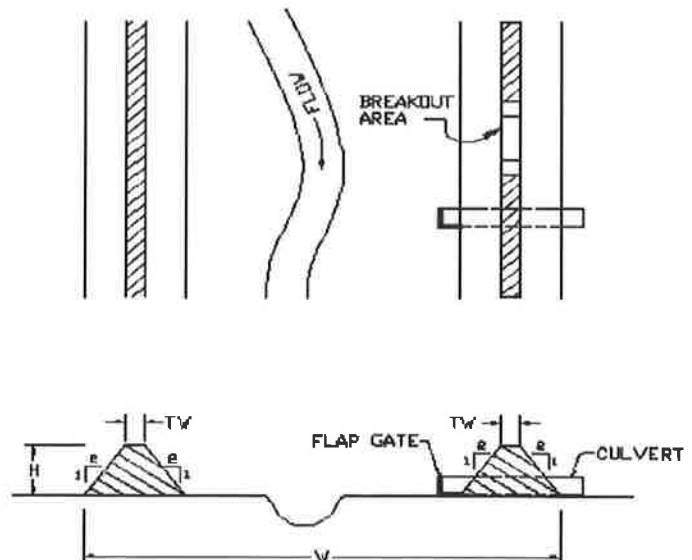
enough that the existing coulee does not have the capacity to be able to carry the water, and consequently the water overtops the coulee banks at several locations and flows overland through ag fields. In addition, the floodwaters overtop several roadways, causing damages to public infrastructure.

This project when complete will be a cooperative effort between Federal, State, and Local governments and private landowners to create a project that will solve the primary goal of directly reducing flood damages to ag land and public infrastructure. In addition, the project will improve water quality and habitat by reducing sediment that enters the coulee, planting grass filter strips, protecting streambanks from erosion, and providing systematic ag drainage.

The project timeline is to complete the plans and specifications in 2011, apply for and secure permit approval during the winter of 2012, let bids for the project in the spring of 2012, and begin construction in summer 2012. It is anticipated that construction can be substantially completed by the end of 2012, however depending on weather and logistics, may take until 2013.

The Two Rivers Watershed District's latest flood control project is moving forward with the planning and design phase. The "Springbrook PL 566 Project #10" is being designed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and consists several project components including the construction of setback levees along approximately 9 miles of an existing natural watercourse, installation of side water inlets for local drainage, establishment of grass buffers, and streambank protection. The project is designed to prevent local flooding for up to what is known as the 10 year flood event. The project is located in Springbrook and Davis Townships in Kittson County, about 1/2 way between the Cities of Karlstad and Donaldson.

This project has been in the making dating back to 1998. Severe and repeated flooding began in 1993, and Federal disaster declarations were made in 1993, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2006, 2009, and 2011. The Springbrook Coulee has a very large upstream drainage area, and is fed by a legal drainage ditch known as Kittson County Ditch #10. The water that comes to the Coulee is substantial





## Brillion Seeder

*By Darren Carlson*

The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has a 12 foot Brillion "Sure Stand" Seeder available to rent for crop year 2012.



### What is a Brillion Seeder?

The Brillion seeder is a broadcast seeder with a front roller and a rear roller. Front rollers crush lumps, press down small stones and form a firm seedbed. Precision seeding devices meter out the seed onto the well prepared seedbed. The rear rollers split the shallow ridges formed by the front rollers and gently firm the soil around the tiny seeds. The S-tine track removal kit minimizes compaction from the tractor tires before the rollers prepare a uniform seedbed. All seed are planted at fingernail depth for maximum germination potential and fast emergence, which is ideal for native grasses establishment. Rent is \$10 per acre, plus a \$75 setup fee, which includes delivery and pickup.

## Plotmaster

*By Darren Carlson*

The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has a PLOTMASTER™ HUNTER 400 available to rent for the 2012 year.



### What is a PLOTMASTER?

PLOTMASTER comes with a 1-point hitch hook-up that connects directly to your ATV. This hitch is designed to fit, 1 7/8" or up to a 2" trailer ball. Therefore, it can be pulled by ATVs (500cc or larger). With a revolutionary custom-designed electric "Versa Seeder" (patent pending) you can plant virtually any type of seed, from Native Grasses to Corn. It dispenses directly behind the area you just cultivated rather than broadcasting your seed in areas you do not intend to plant. Multi-use, spring-loaded cultipacker has adjustable tension, it can be used to level the soil and cover the seed with the proper amount of soil for optimal production. The unique cultipacker is designed to pack the soil and ensure good soil/seed contact, which greatly improves seed germination. Rent is \$100 per day. Plotmaster will be on a trailer and will need to be picked up and delivered back to the Kittson SWCD by the interested person/party.

## 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.

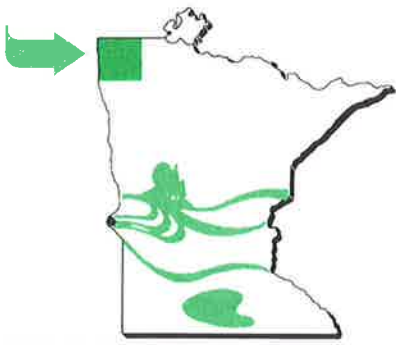
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) continuously takes applications for these areas with high saline soils for enrollment into the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP). To be eligible the area must have been cropped 4 out of 6 years between 2002 and 2007 and must be considered 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.

## WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program)

*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. It provides both technical assistance and cost sharing to help establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat.

This is how whip works, Landowners agree to prepare and implement a wildlife habitat development plan. The USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial assistance for the establishment of the practices. Payments are only to cost-share on the practice establishment. WHIP does not provide rental income or easement purchase payments. Federal cost-share will reimburse up to 75% of the costs. Almost any type of land is eligible. Grassland, woodland, pastureland, wetlands, streams and agricultural or non-agricultural land. Lands not eligible are lands that are currently under some other state or federal program. Please contact your local NRCS office for more information.



# NORTHLAND CONSERVATION NEWS

## WINTER 2011-2012 NEWSLETTER

**SWCD SUPERVISORS:** CHAIRMAN GREG PETERSON, VICE CHAIRMAN - VACANT, SECRETARY JUSTIN DAGEN, TREASURER JOE WILEBSKI, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS RON ANDERSON & JOANNE QUINER

**SWCD STAFF:** DARREN CARLSON - DISTRICT MANAGER AND VIRGINIA OLSON - ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK

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

**TWO RIVERS WATERSHED DISTRICT:** DAN MONEY, ADMINISTRATOR AND MATT THOMPSON, DISTRICT TECHNICIAN

**TWO RIVERS WATERSHED DIST. MGRS.** PRESIDENT - ROGER ANDERSON; VICE PRESIDENT - JON VOLD; SEC. - JIM KUKOWSKI; TREASURER - O'NEIL LARSON; DARRELL JOHNSON, RICHARD NOVACEK AND PAUL OLSONAWSKI

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

## AgBMP Loan Program

*By Virginia Olson*

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 Ag Country Farm Credit Services or American Federal Bank in Hallock, who is also a qualified lender.

## Kittson Soil & Water Conservation District Board Announces Vacancy

The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has a vacancy on its Board of Supervisors. The existing Kittson SWCD Board Members will appoint an individual to serve through 2012. If you are concerned about our natural resources, maintaining and improving water quality and protecting our soil, consider becoming a Board Member of the Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District.

Board Members must live within the area they represent. The area currently vacant and to be filled by appointment until an elected supervisor takes office in January of 2013 is District 2 which includes the Townships of Svea, Teien, Skane, South Red River, North Red River and Hallock.

Board Members are responsible for setting policy and program direction for the Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District. Specific responsibilities include attending one monthly Board meeting, plus additional committee meetings and regional conservation events. Supervisors do not receive a salary; however, they are paid per diem plus expenses.

Interested individuals are requested to send a letter of interest to the attention of Darren Carlson, District Manager; Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District: 410 South 5th Street, Suite 106; Hallock, MN 56728. For more information about the Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District and the role of Board Members contact Darren Carlson (218) 843-2619, ext. 3. You can also visit the web site at [www.nwmnswcd.org](http://www.nwmnswcd.org).

## Meet Virginia Olson

Virginia joined our staff in April 2011. She was hired as the Administrative Clerk. She lives on a farm east of Lancaster. She has worked in various bookkeeping jobs in and out of the area. She has five grown children. The best of all she says is being a grandma to two wonderful granddaughters and a grandson.

## Funding Available For Abandoned Or Unused Well Sealing

*By Darren Carlson*

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 - 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.

## Kittson SWCD Tree Program

*By Darren Carlson*

The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) annually makes available thousands of trees to county landowners at a reduced cost for conservation. These trees are inexpensive and are from wholesale nurseries here in our state.

The tree program was started to promote conservation and help residents create a more beautiful, healthy and ecologically balanced environment. Many of the county's farmstead and field windbreaks, wildlife habitat plantings and reforestation efforts have been started as a result of this program.

The Kittson SWCD encourages all residents to utilize the tree program and purchase stock to start or add to their own beautification plans. Technical advice on tree plantings for windbreaks and shelterbelts is also available upon request.

A tree order form is located within this newsletter.