

# *Redwood Soil And Water*



## *Conservation District*

### *Annual Plan of Work*

# 2009

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

**Redwood Soil and Water Conservation District is the local unit of government that provides assistance to citizens who are interested in preserving, restoring and protecting soil and water resources in Redwood County.**

**The purpose of this plan is to guide us in effectively providing maximum conservation to all the land in the district with placing priorities on high priority areas as identified. This plan includes guidelines for employees and supervisors for the achievement of the district's objectives.**

**Our 2009 Annual Plan of Work is developed from annual needs, and Redwood County's Local Comprehensive Water Management Plan, which the district adopted July 14, 2005, as our five-year comprehensive plan. Redwood County's Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan was updated in 2005. The district will implement conservation program necessary to achieve our goals. The Clean Water Legacy – Program years 2007 and 2008, Redwood County Local Water Management Plan, Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA), Federal Farm Bill – (EQIP, WHIP, WRP and CSP Components), Redwood River Basin Project, Cottonwood River Restoration Project, Minnesota Best Management Practice (BMP) Loan Program and cost share programs are high priority programs with the Board and Staff. Due to the complexity of these programs, staff time will be adjusted to insure success of all programs and any other program that may require implementation.**

**The mission of the Redwood Soil and Water Conservation District is to educate and assist the citizens of Redwood County to efficiently and economically manage the soil and water resources of the County, for present and future generations.**

## **II. ANNUAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

### **1. District operations:**

#### **OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE FOR AN EFFICIENT DISTRICT OPERATION.**

Plan of Action:

- a) Regular board meetings will be held the second Thursday of each month. December – March 9:30 a.m. and April – November 8:00 a.m. January will be the reorganizing meeting of the year.
- b) In July, review Annual Plan of Work and Comprehensive Plan.
- c) The district will staff an Administrator, a District Technician, who will spend 50% of their time as the Farm Bill staff member, an Office Assistant, and a part-time Education Coordinator.
- d) Hold regular staff meetings. In January, district and Federal staff will assess past, present and future conservation acts in the county.
- e) Necessary training will be provided for all personnel in order to carry out the district programs.
- f) Duties and performance requirements will be reviewed at the April monthly board meeting.
- g) Supervisors will periodically review operations and develop priorities. At the February board meeting, conservation goals will be addressed.
- h) The district board will annually review the various memorandums of understanding.

**OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE FOR AN EFFICIENT DISTRICT OPERATION. (continued)**

Plan of Action: (continued)

- i) A minimum of one supervisor and staff member shall be present at all Area V meetings, and the Annual MASWCD Convention, if possible.
- j) Membership and support will continue in the Area V Association, MASWCD and NACD.
- k) District board and staff will assist in development of conservation programs with other agencies.
- l) Continue implementation of Redwood County's Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan.
- m) Utilize eLink web based reporting system to report progress.
- n) Provide representation to the RCRC Board to provide district input.
- o) Maintain an efficient rain gauge monitoring network within the county.
- p) Review and comment on all DNR water permits in identifying environmental problems.
- q) Will continue to cooperate with DNR to monitor water level in 7 wells across the county.
- r) Develop the budget and present to County Commissioners.
- s) Will accept Redwood County's Comprehensive Water Management Plan as the district Five-Year Work Plan.
- t) Provide representation to the Coteau Des Prairies RC&D.
- u) Convene stakeholder meeting and local work group for establishing priorities for EQIP and other conservation programs.
- v) Provide representation on Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area board.
- w) Staff will meet with County FAC committee at least twice a year to discuss issues related to the building.
- x) All programs and services of the conservation office are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

**2. Conservation Planning and Application:**

**OBJECTIVE #1: TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO LANDUSERS IN THE HIGH PRIORITY AREAS OF THE COUNTY BY REDUCING WIND EROSION ON 5,000 ACRES AND REDUCING WATER EROSION ON 3,000 ACRES.**

Plan of Action:

- a) Assist landowners and units of government who are interested in protecting the soil and water resources.
- b) The Farm Bill person is on staff to promote CRP, WHIP, FWP, WRP and other provisions in the Farm Bill.

**OBJECTIVE #1: TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO LANDUSERS IN THE HIGH PRIORITY AREAS OF THE COUNTY BY REDUCING WIND EROSION ON 5,000 ACRES AND REDUCING WATER EROSION ON 3,000 ACRES. (Continued)**

- c) Technical staff will develop high quality conservation plans. Assistance will be directed toward meeting the goals of County Local Water Management Plan, cost share programs and 2008 Farm Bill.
- d) Technical staff will provide assistance in application of conservation practices and follow up of applied practices to meet standards and specifications in the NRCS Technical Guide.
- e) Provide technical assistance to install the following conservation practices:
  - 15 acres       Grassed Waterways
  - 1 mile         Field Windbreak
  - 15             Water and Sediment Control Basins
  - 2000 feet     Terraces
- f) Promote the increased use of reduce till, best management practice to establish 1500 new acres.
- g) If required, conduct conservation tillage transect survey for the county.
- h) Enroll 120 acres of highly sensitive land in pasture land with a prescribed grazing system.

**OBJECTIVE #2: PROVIDE COVER ON 350 ACRES OF LAND IN THE FLOODPLAIN.**

Plan of Action:

- a) Monitor the 77 acres of filter strips along drainage ditches and rivers in the county, administered through the Redwood County Water Management Plan cost-share program.
- b) Support federal, state and local programs to provide for a buffer zone along drainage ways, streams and rivers. Programs include RIM, CCRP, CRP and WRP.
- c) Provide technical assistance by assisting flood prevention programs through various local, state and federal agencies (RCRCA, Area II, DNR, and Army Corps of Engineers.)

**OBJECTIVE #3: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF WATER IN REDWOOD COUNTY.**

Plan of Action:

- a) In conjunction with the other 6 SWCD's in the Redwood Cottonwood River Watershed, apply for Clean Water Legacy Funds as they become available.
- b) County Local Water Management Plan Implementation:
  - 1. 20% of district employees' time will be spent on implementation of County Local Water Management Plan.
  - 2. Assist RCRCA, NRCS, and Army Corps of Engineers in data collection.
- c) Work with zoning administrator and MPCA to provide technical information, as requested, on zoning ordinances and permit applications.
  - 1. Provide assistance to develop conservation plan on shore impact zones as defined in County Shoreland Ordinance.

**OBJECTIVE #3: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF WATER IN REDWOOD COUNTY.**  
**(continued)**

- d) Provide technical assistance to landusers by:
  - 1. Installing 4 ag waste systems.
  - 2. Establishing permanent cover on 500 acres, to protect and improve water quality through CCRP.
  
- e) 3. Assist with the completion of 10 wetland restorations under the Farmable Wetland Program.
  
- f) As a contributing sponsor of the Clean Water Partnership programs for the Redwood River and Cottonwood River, provide assistance, as needed, for the implementation phase.
  - 1. Work with county, city, RCRCA and other entities.
  - 2. Provide technical assistance to promote and implement Best Management Practices in the Clean Water Partnership area.
  - 3. Reduce sediment loading to all surface waters in the county.
  - 4. Encourage landowners to participate in land retirement programs.
  - 5. Provide information and education on implementation plans.
  - 6. Support the clean out of Lake Redwood.
  - 7. Implement practices that will reduce TMDL's to remove water bodies from the list of impaired waters.
  
- g) Take responsibility as the Local Governmental Unit for the county in the implementation of Minnesota's Wetland Conservation Act to preserve threatened wetlands.
  
- h) Encourage landusers to acquire low interest loans through the State Ag Best Management Practice (BMP) Loan Program.
  - 1. Utilize revolving fund dollars from 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999 in appropriate categories.
  
  - 2. Assist landusers, at local level, in applying for loans.
    - a. 1 ag waste
    - b. 3 land users to practice conservation tillage.
    - c. 6 individuals to upgrade out of compliance individual septic systems.
  
  - 3. Provide a representative and participate in the 10-county Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area for State Ag BMPs, which provides technical assistance to applicants of the loan program.

**OBJECTIVE 4: TO PROTECT THE WETLANDS AND UNIQUE HABITAT FOUND IN THE ANCIENT BEDROCK OUT CROP IN THE MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY.**

Plan of Action

- a) Enroll 90 acres of bedrock areas that contain unique wetland areas.
- b) Continue to follow up on 126 acres previously enrolled through the LCCMR grant from 2007.

### 3. Tree Program:

#### **OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE TREES TO INDIVIDUALS FOR EROSION CONTROL, ENERGY CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE HABITAT.**

##### Plan of Action:

- a) Provide information to the public on the value of trees, through the use of 5 news items, news releases, newsletters and other forms of media.
- b) Insure that all plantings are established with good quality nursery stock and a follow-up contact is made for replacements.
- c) Staff responsibilities:
  1. Plan for sale of 10,000 trees.
  2. Make 15 contacts for sale of trees.
  3. Estimate 1 mile of field windbreak.
  4. Plant 12 acres of farmstead shelterbelts.
  5. Plant 5 acres of wildlife plantings.
  6. Plant 1500 feet of Living Snow fence.
- d) Work with other agencies, DNR's Private Land Specialist, Pheasants Forever, and Deer Hunters Association, etc., to promote tree plantings.

### 4. Education and Information Program:

#### **OBJECTIVE: TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES.**

##### Plan of Action:

- a) District will promote conservation programs in the county through:
  1. Twenty presentations to schools, 4-H clubs, boy and girl scouts, water quality material, etc.
  2. Have a booth at the County fair. In conjunction with SWCD's in Area V and VI host a booth at Farmfest.
  3. Presentation for ministers in county to promote Soil and Water Stewardship Week.
  4. Distribute Stewardship material to churches throughout the county.
  5. Select Conservation Farmer and publish a news article on their accomplishments.
  6. Implement the education components of the Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan.
- b) The district will participate by making presentations in local schools promoting the yearly contest theme.
  1. Poster contest.
  2. Video contest.
- c) Affiliate Member Program.
  1. Inform businesses and others of the opportunity to participate in and learn about district conservation activities.
    - a) Make presentation on conservation activities.
    - b) Develop and mail a newsletter to all affiliate members.
  2. Conduct a membership drive to achieve participation and involvement in the district programs.

**OBJECTIVE: TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES.**

- d) Forms of media to be used to inform the public:
  - 1. Have weekly radio program
  - 2. Bi-monthly news articles to local area newspapers.
  - 3. Seasonal radio spot ads.
  - 4. Displays in lobby of Ag Service Center
  - 5. Develop brochures and fact sheets.
  - 6. Continue to update District web site ([redwoodswcd.org](http://redwoodswcd.org))
  - 7. Develop and send newsletters to local schools.
  
- e) Work with other Area V districts to promote environmental learning through activities of the Education Committee, Area and State Envirothon and the Environmental Fair.
  
- f) Provide informational meetings, mail out letters and materials on conservation programs for commodity groups in the county.
  
- g) Co-sponsor a multi-county Woman's Conservation Day.
  
- h) Make contact with women's organizations, civic groups and other organizations notifying them about the availability of conservation programs.
  
- i) Host a tour of conservation activities in the county.

**III. STAFFING NEEDS**

Our staffing needs to achieve an effective program are based on two full-time technical people (one NRCS and one district) one District Administrator, one Office Assistant and one part-time Education Coordinator.

	<b>ADMINISTRATOR</b>	<b>OFFICE ASSISTANT</b>	<b>TECHNICAL</b>	<b>EDUCATION COORDINATOR</b>
<b>DISTRICT OPERATIONS</b> To provide an overall efficient district operation.	<b>.65</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.45</b>	<b>.20</b>
<b>CONSERVATION PLANNING AND APPLICATIONS</b> To provide assistance to land users in the high priority areas of the county by reducing soil erosion on 2000 acres, water erosion on 1000 acres and Floodplain protection on 100 acres.	<b>.20</b>	<b>.20</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>.20</b>
<b>TREE PROGRAM</b> Provide trees to individuals for erosion control, energy conservation and wildlife habitat.	<b>.05</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.20</b>	<b>.05</b>
<b>EDUCATION &amp; INFORMATION</b> To increase public awareness of the soil and water conservation activities in Redwood County.	<b>.20</b>	<b>.25</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.35</b>
<b>Total Staff Time for FY 2009</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>.80</b>

#### **IV. COST SHARE REQUIREMENTS**

##### **A. HIGH PRIORITY EROSION PROBLEMS**

High priority erosion problems have been defined as:

“High priority erosion problems” means areas where erosion from wind or water is occurring equal to, or in excess of, 2 x T tons per acre per year or is occurring on 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.

Water erosion is occurring at a rate of 2T on 25,000 acres of land in the county.

Wind erosion is occurring on approximately 135,000 acres throughout the county at a rate that exceeds 2T per acres per year. However, our high priority areas where we will be concentrating our efforts are in: Paxton, Sherman, Vesta, Underwood, Delhi, Charlestown and Springdale townships.

The funds needed to install practices such as terraces, waterways, field windbreaks and diversions to control high priority wind and water problems in these areas come from State Cost Share, EQIP Cost Share program, Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan funds and Clean Water Legacy funds.

##### **B. HIGH PRIORITY WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS.**

High priority water quality leading to sedimentation problems have been defined as:

“High priority water quality problems” means areas where sediment, nutrients, chemicals, or other pollutants discharge into Department of Natural Resources-designated protected waters, or to any high priority waters, as identified in a comprehensive local water plan or the conservation district’s comprehensive plan, or discharge to sinkholes or groundwater. The pollutant delivery rate to the water source is in amounts that will impair the quality or usefulness of the water resource.

The sedimentation in our county occurs along the Minnesota, Redwood and Cottonwood Rivers, specifically in the townships of Springdale, Lamberton, Charlestown and Johnsonville. Along these drainageways, there is approximately 14,000 acres of land that exceeds 3 tons per acre per year.

The funds needed to install practices such as terraces, waterways, alternative \$223,375.00, and will come from the District’s Cost Share Program, Clean Water Legacy Program, Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan funds and EQIP.

**B. HIGH PRIORITY WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS (continued).**

High priority feedlots are defined as:

“Those feedlots where the pollution potential rating (from the ag waste model) is greater than or equal to one, and is discharging pollutants to DNR-designated protected waters or wetlands, to a sinkhole, to shallow soils overlying fractured or cavernous bedrock, or within 150 feet of a water well.”

Cost share on high priority feedlots will be considered on an individual basis. We will consider establishing a new pollution abatement system or bringing an established system into compliance.

Items which may be cost shared: clean water diversions, buffer strips, holding ponds or complete systems, if necessary.

**C. COST SHARE PROGRAM SUMMARY.**

Redwood Soil and Water Conservation District considers high priority projects first. The SWCD cost shares 75% of the total cost, not to exceed \$3,500, unless it is a special project where the district will waive the \$3,500, provided the landowner does not receive more than 75% of the total cost. The district receives \$23,418 in state cost share funds of which 20% is used for Technical and administrative functions in the district. The cost share dollars will be encumbered for: contours, filter strips, no-till systems, alternative intakes, field windbreaks, grade stabilization structures, grassed waterways and water sediment control basins.

*See breakdown below.*

Cost share funds needed to install the practices as outlined throughout the plan.

<b>Practice</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Cost Share</b>
15 ac. of Waterways	\$60,000	\$45,000
1 mile Field Windbreak	2,500	1,875
12 acres Farmstead Shelterbelt	5,500	4,125
10.0 FWP Restorations	20,000	15,000
4 Ag Waste Systems	200,000	100,000
Filter strips Maintain 77 acres	10,000	10,000
15 Water & Sediment Basins	82,500	61,875
2000 feet Terraces	14,000	10,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$376,500</b>	<b>\$248,375</b>

State Cost Share, Clean Water Legacy & EQIP	\$223,375
Water Plan Funds	10,000
CCRP	15,000

**V. BUDGET**

Our total budget needs for staff, cost share and operation expenses are as follows:

<b>REVENUES:</b>	
SWCD Service Grant	\$ 45,105
State Cost Share	19,418
State Grant – (DNR Wells) 12,550 + 840	27,090
NRCS Contribution	0
Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) & Water Plan Adm	16,834
Tree Sales and Planting	12,000
Water Plan	18,375
Interest Earnings & Principal Return	7,800
Affiliate Program	1,300
County	114,000
Miscellaneous	1,000
Local (RCRCA Reimbursement)	21,507

<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 284,429</b>
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<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>	
District Operations	
Personnel Services	\$186,636
Rent	14,000
Office Maintenance	3,000
Employee Training	1,000
Vehicle Maintenance	2,000
Insurance	5,500
Education, Promotion & Advertising	2,000
Supplies	1,000
Supervisors Comp & Expenses	12,000
Professional Services Exp & Dues	8,000
Capital Outlay	2,000
Tree Program Expense	8,000
Miscellaneous	1,500
<b>Total District Operations</b>	<b>\$246,636</b>

Special Projects

State Cost Share	\$19,418
Water Plan	18,375
<b>Total Special Project Expenses</b>	<b>37,793</b>

<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 284,429</b>
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