

RICE SWCD CONSERVATION NEWS



Rice Soil and Water Conservation District, 1810 30th St. NW, Faribault, MN, 55021
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Funds Available for Flood Damaged Areas

September rains capped off a very wet year and brought about major flooding in Southeast Minnesota. In response to the floods, the MN legislature passed funding to help fix damage caused by the floods in late September. Rice SWCD has been allocated \$25,000 in cost-share to assist with a wide variety of conservation practices and repairs to existing structures. Some examples of eligible practices are waterways, stream bank stabilization, terraces, and many more. In addition, the state has funds available through the RIM (Reinvest in Minnesota) program for easements in flood prone areas. If you had damage resulting from the rains of late September, please contact us for more information on how we may be able to assist you.

Rice SWCD Welcomes Katie Richards

My name is Katie Richards and I am the new Nutrient Management Specialist for Rice SWCD. My work area includes Rice, Goodhue, Wabasha, Steele, Dodge and Freeborn counties. I grew up around Ellendale, Minnesota, on a family farm. My grandfather and father finished out Holstein steers and hogs. Along with the livestock, the farm had about 1000 acres of corn and soybeans. I graduated NRHEG high school. Through middle and high school, I was in band, basketball and 4-H. I attended South Dakota State University in Brookings, South Dakota and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Agronomy.

The purpose of a nutrient management plan is to assist producers and landowners on the location, rate, timing, form and method of application for nutrients. It is a tool to increase net returns and to protect the natural resources. NMP's are required for those in some USDA (NRCS) incentive and cost-share programs and recommended to all farms



Rice SWCD Staff

Steven Pahs, District Manager
Tim Labs, District Program Manager
Debbie Skarupa, District Secretary
Danielle Waldschmidt, Farmbill Technician
Kathrine Richards, Nutrient Management Specialist

Natural Resources Conservation Service Staff

Thomas Coffman, District Conservationist
Kelly Oliver, Soil Conservation Technician



as a tool for good farm management. If you would like to develop a NMP for your farm, please call me to schedule an appointment. I look forward to meeting the farmers in and around Rice County!

Grass Buffer Incentive Available Now

A new program will provide incentives for landowners to install 50 foot wide grass strips along streams and rivers in the counties of Goodhue, Rice, Steele and Waseca. Funding for this project is from a grant from the Minnesota Clean Water Fund.

All eligible acres will receive \$600 per acre for non-harvestable land coupled with CRP or \$800 per acre for harvestable land. The land must be kept in a vegetated state for 10 years. Landowners decide what type of grass to plant and whether or not to harvest the grass. Due to limited funds, sign-up will take place on a first-come basis.

Research has shown that grass strips along water bodies provide a natural buffer, trapping soil, nutrients and reducing herbicide and pesticide drift into our lakes and streams. Grass buffers also extend the life of drainage ditches and provide wildlife habitat for many species of animals.

To sign up or for more information contact the Rice Soil and Water Conservation District at 507-332-5408. A conservation technician will review the area you are interested in enrolling and determine eligibility.

Equipment Available as CWMA Expands

Rice SWCD formed a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) in 2008 to enable multiple agencies to coordinate and share available resources regarding invasive species management. The focus area for the CWMA was the Cannon River Wilderness Area. Through this grant we held educational workshops, volunteer days and controlled buckthorn at the Cannon River Wilderness Area.

We recently expanded the CWMA to include all of

Local Conservation Awards

Congratulations to **Fred and Karen Becker** of Northfield on being selected Outstanding Conservationist for 2010! The Becker's have implemented several practices over the years including sediment control basins, a windbreak, and no-till farming. Congratulations to the Becker family.

Don and Curtis Piper of Faribault received the 2010 Forest Stewardship Award. The Piper's have been improving their forested land for many years with practices such as Buckthorn control, hardwood plantings, and much more. Congratulations Piper's!

John and Matt Carlander received the Wildlife Enhancement Award for 2010. They have many acres of land that they have improved habitat on in Rice County. Native grass establishment, wetland restorations, and food plots are just some of their many accomplishments. Good work!

Rice and Scott Counties. The focus of the CWMA will continue to be buckthorn with additional educational workshops and volunteer days planned. Buckthorn is a concern for the area because it is one of the most prevalent invasive plants found scattered throughout Minnesota's forests. Buckthorn is a shrub or small tree that out-competes native plants for nutrients, light and moisture forming an impenetrable layer of vegetation that degrades natural habitats.

To assist landowners with buckthorn removal we have weed wrenches available for landowners with a refundable deposit. The weed wrenches are used to pull buckthorn with little effort. Contact Danielle Waldschmidt at 507.332.5408 to reserve a weed wrench.

For more information on the CWMA, buckthorn, volunteer days and educational workshops go to riceswcd.org or contact Danielle Waldschmidt at 507.332.5408.

NRCS is Taking Applications for Federal Programs

NRCS is now taking applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

EQIP provides technical and financial assistance for practices such as terraces, water and sediment control basins, grassed waterways, feedlot fixes, nutrient management, no-till residue management, well sealing, and buckthorn removal. WHIP provides technical and financial assistance for practices such as buckthorn control, tree and shrub planting, prairie restoration, and wetland restoration. WRP provides technical and financial assistance for wetland restoration and wetland buffers. WRP is available in 30-yr or permanent easements, with cost-share on installation costs. CSP is a new voluntary program that launched in 2009. CSP encourages producers by providing annual payments to maintain existing conservation practices while adopting

additional ones on their operations. CSP is available on cropland, woodlands, and pasture.

Please contact Tom or Kelly for additional information at 507-334-1887 x3.

Welcome to New SWCD Supervisors!

January 2011 marks the beginning of service for newly elected supervisors Dale Neirby and Jim Purfeerst. Dale is a veterinarian and fills the District 5 seat representing Faribault. Jim is a farmer and fills the seat in District 3 made up of Walcott, Richland, Cannon City, and Wheeling Townships. Welcome aboard!

Well Wishes for Retiring Supervisors

In order for the SWCD to function well, it takes direction from people in the community who are dedicated to soil and water conservation. We are very fortunate to have had two gentlemen who are just that. Wally Hildebrandt has served on the Rice SWCD Board for 51 years! Robert Borchert served for 8 years! It is not enough just to say they served a long time on the board. Both Wally and Robert have been very active in the conservation arena, serving on many committees both local and statewide. Wally was recognized as the Minnesota Outstanding Supervisor of the Year in 2003, and Robert has just been awarded the same title in 2010! With over 400 supervisors statewide, it is a huge honor to have two supervisors receive this award from our own board! Each has been an asset not only to the people of Rice County, but also to the state. While their length of service is quite different, what they brought to the soil and water conservation world will have lasting impacts. Wally and Robert will be missed. We wish them well in their retirement from the Rice SWCD Board.

Open House Planned for Wally Hildebrandt

Where: Curtis Hall 4-H Building at Rice Co. Fairgrounds

When: January 21st from 1 to 4 pm

Please join us in celebrating Wally Hildebrandt's retirement after 51 years on the Rice SWCD Board!

Refreshments will be served.


Tree and Shrub Sale is On!

It's that time of year again! Time to place your orders for next spring. We have a few new varieties of trees this year, including Nigra-Dark Green Arborvitae, which is a great tree for windbreaks and wildlife. We also have a good supply of Princeton American Elm, which is naturally resistant to Dutch Elm Disease. If you are looking for something to replace your Ash trees with, Elm, Hackberry, Basswood, Maples and Oaks are all good choices. Order early for best selection.

As always, if you are planting a windbreak, we offer free windbreak design. Just ask!

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