

# RICE SWCD CONSERVATION NEWS

Rice Soil and Water Conservation District, 1810 30<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Faribault, MN, 55021  
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## National Sign-Up for New Conservation Stewardship Program

In August the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) began a continuous sign-up for the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). CSP is a voluntary program that encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional ones on their operations.

"This program will help the Nation's agricultural and forestry producers reach greater levels of conservation performance, which will help protect our land and water," NRCS's Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan said. "The conservation benefits derived from maintaining and enhancing natural resources will improve the quality of soil and water, assist in addressing global climate change, and encourage environmentally responsible energy production."

For information about CSP, including eligibility requirements, producers can visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/new\\_csp](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp) or visit the Faribault Field Office.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers CSP. Eligible lands include cropland, improved pastureland, and non-industrial private forestland.

Eligible applicants may include individual landowners, legal entities, and Indian tribes. The program will be offered to producers in all 50 states, District of Columbia and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. Agricultural and forestry producers must submit applications by Sept. 30 to be considered for funding in the first ranking period. Congress capped the annual



Filter Strip in Cannon City Township

acreage enrollment at 12,769,000 acres for each fiscal year nationwide.

USDA is finalizing the program's policies and procedures. The CSP interim final rule, published in the Federal Register, is open for public comment through Sept. 28.

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### Rice SWCD Staff

Steven Pahs, District Manager  
Tim Labs, District Program Manager  
Debbie Skarupa, District Secretary  
Danielle Waldschmidt, Stormwater Technician  
Adam Arndt, Nutrient Management Specialist

### Natural Resources Conservation Service Staff

Thomas Coffman, District Conservationist  
Kelly Oliver, Soil Conservation Technician  
Lucas Altwegg, Part-Time Technician

## Rice SWCD Funds Raingarden Installations

Rice SWCD was the recipient of a Land and Stream Conservation Partnership grant for \$5000 from MN Waters, a statewide non-profit organization. The grant was made possible by a matching donation from Michelob Golden Draft Light and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The Lake and Stream Conservation Partnership is designed to help citizen groups across Minnesota implement projects that improve shoreland habitat and water quality in their communities.

The grant Rice SWCD received from MN Waters was implemented to educate the public about raingardens by holding a workshop, and to provide funds to landowners interested in completing a raingarden.

A raingarden is a shallow depression in the ground that collects rain water from impervious surfaces. The raingarden acts as a filter to remove harmful chemicals and pollutants. The water that enters a raingarden is either used by the plants or percolates through the soil, refreshing the ground water supply.

A raingarden workshop was held on April 7<sup>th</sup> to provide basic information on raingardens and covered the steps to design a raingarden. The Rice County Master Gardeners assisted homeowners in designing their raingarden. Over 35 people attended the workshop.

The second part of the grant was to provide funds to landowners interested in installing a raingarden. Landowners completed an application for their raingarden that included a design with location, plants, etc. There were fifteen raingardens constructed on fourteen sites.

All of the raingardens were completed this summer. Approximately 2800 square feet of raingardens were constructed. Each of the

raingardens completed has a unique style to address a specific concern for each site. Landowners are responsible for installing the raingarden and completing any needed maintenance of the raingarden.

Rice SWCD partnered with Rice County, the City of Faribault and the Rice County Master Gardeners to make this project happen.

If you are interested in learning more about raingardens please contact Danielle Waldschmidt at 507.332.5408 or [Danielle.waldschmidt@mn.nacdn.net](mailto:Danielle.waldschmidt@mn.nacdn.net). Rice SWCD is looking for additional funds for landowners to install additional raingardens in Rice County.



Raingarden installed in Faribault

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## Rice SWCD Receives Grant for Cooperative Weed Management Area

The Rice SWCD has received a Cooperative Weed Management Grant through the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to form a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA). With this grant we will control the invasive species buckthorn. Today common buckthorn is one of the most prevalent invasive plants found scattered throughout Minnesota's forests.

We will begin by concentrating our effects in the Cannon River Wilderness Area. Within the 800 plus acre Cannon River Wilderness Area, locations of buckthorn have been identified. This fall we will start the process of removing 5-10 acres of buckthorn in one of the most infested areas of the wilderness.

To raise awareness about the spread of invasive species the MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has held informative landowner workshops to educate individuals about buckthorn and its potential to threaten the Big Woods ecosystem. The University of MN Extension has also provided assistance with education and outreach and will continue to do so. Look for a website to



Buckthorn

be created soon, a branch of the Rice SWCD website ([riceswcd.org](http://riceswcd.org)), which will serve as the primary tool used to inform community members about upcoming meetings and events.

Through prevention and early detection invasive species can be managed to prevent further degradation of areas with high biological diversity. Formation of the CWMA will enable multiple agencies to coordinate and share available resources regarding invasive species management.

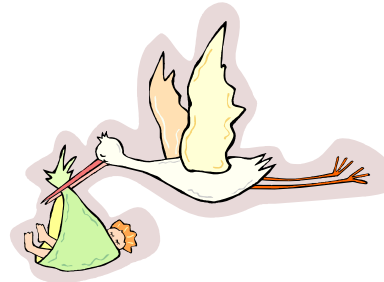
For more information on the CWMA or upcoming workshops on buckthorn go to [riceswcd.org](http://riceswcd.org) or contact Adam Arndt at 507.332.5408.

## Save Water with a Rain Barrel

A rain barrel is a container that is connected to roof gutters or placed to collect rainwater. The water is contained and then used for watering grass, flower gardens or washing cars. Rain barrels not only save money on watering bills but also conserve water, reduce stormwater runoff and prevent erosion.

Please check our website at [www.riceswcd.org](http://www.riceswcd.org) for more information on rain barrels.

## It's a Boy



On August 28, 2009, Kelly and Scott Oliver welcomed baby boy Noah Russell into their family.

Noah weighed 7 pounds 14 ounces and is 20 inches long. Both mom and baby are doing well. Older sister Emily is excited for the addition to the family.

The Rice Soil and Water Conservation District thanks the following businesses for supporting this newsletter:

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