

Carlton County Soil and Water Conservation District 2010 Annual Plan of Operations

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Carlton County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is to assist land occupiers in protecting and enhancing the natural resources of Carlton County. This mission is carried out through three primary program categories.

1. Conservation Education and Information
2. Technical Assistance
3. Financial Assistance

The SWCD implements programs to assist land occupiers in all land use areas of the county including: agricultural, forested, rural residential, and urban. With limited resources available, programs must be prioritized.

The SWCD's Annual Plan provides this prioritization, outlining the primary objectives the SWCD will address for 2010 and the staff resources the SWCD will devote to these objectives. This plan also incorporates the SWCD's comprehensive plan, a 5 year long range plan that was updated in 2010.

Staffing:

The SWCD employs two full time staff, a Technician and a Manager, a part time Administrative Assistant for 20 hours per week, and a Water Resources Coordinator that is under contract to complete specific tasks for the Nemadji River Deer Creek TMDL study.

Comprehensive Plan Goals:

The Carlton County SWCD has identified 7 goals as priorities to be addressed in this Comprehensive Plan.

1. Seek funding to sustain SWCD operations and deliver technical and financial assistance to county landowners
2. Develop long term space for SWCD operations
3. Cooperate with Carlton County in implementation of its Water Plan
4. Cooperate with Carlton County in implementation of property tax programs.
5. Build on the existing SWCD education program to engage Carlton County youth in the responsible use of natural resources.
6. Expand civic engagement opportunities
7. Continue results based planning and budgeting

Some aspects of the annual plan will address multiple comprehensive plan objectives.

ANNUAL PLAN PRIMARY OBJECTIVES SUMMARY

Conservation implementation is a high priority for the SWCD. Assistance will be provided in the following areas:

Forestry

With most grant projects in forestry complete, the focus has shifted to grant writing for project implementation.

1. Continue to promote forestry services program with a focus on implementation projects.
2. Support the research and development of biomass energy projects for the county through conservation partners.
3. Continue the SWCD Tree Sale.
4. Support the Kettle River Private Woodlands Council.
5. Seek grants to fund staff for forestry technical assistance.

Agriculture

With more NRCS Staff at the Duluth Field office and a part time NRCS technician in Carlton County, ag producers are being better served for farm bill programs. The SWCD will continue to work with partners to bring these programs to Carlton County producers.

1. Continue to promote opportunities for conservation implementation through farm bill programs.
2. Coordinate and participate in producer education events.

Urban and Rural Residential

The SWCD's Technician is a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) and received certification as an Erosion Control System Installer/Inspector. This capability will help the SWCD address issues of stormwater management and construction site erosion control.

1. Continue to provide assistance to the private sector and local governments on urban erosion control and water quality issues.

Financial assistance will be utilized through conservation implementation in all land use areas of the county.

Administration

Significant SWCD resources are directed to the administration of the SWCD. New legislative initiatives from the 2007 session place additional requirements on the SWCD. Accountability for program and grant dollars requires accurate and timely reporting. Continuation of existing administrative responsibilities includes:

1. Complete all needed SWCD reporting requirements.
2. Manage payroll for SWCD staff and Supervisors.
3. Conduct an annual conservation recognition event.

In addition in 2010 the SWCD will:

1. Continue to pursue a funding package for the green building project to address long term space needs.
2. Continue to work with funding partners on sustainable SWCD funding.

Staff and Supervisors continue to manage the challenging financial situation of the SWCD. Sustainable funding remains a goal for the SWCD. With inadequate reserves, and yearly budget and cash flow issues, the SWCD will continue to work towards sustainable funding. The priority remains to maintain staff to implement the programs the SWCD is responsible for. This has involved cut backs in some areas and shifting resources in other areas. The second priority is to build a reserve operating fund to better deal with future funding decreases without major upsets to operations. The SWCD will continue expanding the charges for services programs where applicable, build administration expenses into grants for income, and working with state and local officials to build the SWCDs budget to address this sustainable funding goal.

Conservation Education

Although education and outreach programs have taken the brunt of budget cuts in recent years, the SWCD is committed to maintaining programs and opportunities for conservation education in the county. SWCD awareness and program promotion will be continued through news releases, public presentations and meetings, and direct mailings. Adult and student education activities will be continued, taking advantage of conservation partners to assist in these efforts. In addition the SWCD will continue implementation of grants for development at the Carlton School Forest facility.

Special Projects

The SWCD will continue leading a TMDL study on the Nemadji River and Deer Creek that began in 2008. Watersheds with TMDL's encompassing the other two major watersheds of the county will likely provide more opportunities for the SWCD to access implementation funding.

With federal funding of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, there are many grant opportunities for conservation implementation in the Lake Superior portion of the county. The SWCD currently has multiple requests in the system and will continue this effort into the future.

Supervisors' have an active roll in many aspects of Carlton SWCD operations and programs. The following workload analysis reflects the collective time spent by staff and supervisors on specific areas of operation.

Workload Analysis

Category / Activity	Manager	Technician	TMDL Tech	Admin. Assist.	Board
Forestry					
Bio Energy Program Development	40				
Tree Program	100	10		200	30
Fee For Services Assistance		230			
Forestry Technical Assistance		400			
SWCD Forestry Assoc.	50				
Woodland Council		20			
Agriculture					
Farm Bill Programs Promotion	20				
Agriculture Technical Assistance		80			
Urban/Rural Residential					
Urban Tech. Assist Program		50			
Education/Outreach					
School Forest Development	10				
Student Education	30	60		40	20
Adult Outreach	50	220		20	20
SWCD Promotion	120			40	30
Wetland Consvr. Act					
LGU Assistance		230			
Fee for Service Assistance		100			
Special Projects					
TMDL Project	50		1768		
Weed Management Program					
SWAG	20			50	
Coastal TA	10				
SWCD Administration					
Financial Management	50			192	
SWCD Management	650	60		300	
SWCD Reporting		200		150	
Grant admin and reporting	140	28			
SWCD Building	60				50
Grant Administration change to grant developmnet	108				
Develop SWCD Events	40				20
SWCD Planning	50				15
MASWCD/Area III/ MACDE	120				
Training	50	80			
TOTAL	1768	1768	1768	992	185

Notes to Workload Analysis:

234 staff days/year subtract 26 days for holidays and vacation days = 208 days /full time staff

208 day x 8.5 hours = **1768 hours** /year for full time employee

Administrative Assistant works 20hrs/wk x 52 weeks – 6 days leave/holidays = **992 hours**

COST-SHARE PROGRAMS

The Carlton County SWCD has financial tools to aid county residents in implementation of erosion and sediment control, and water quality best management practices.

Source	2010 Amount
Ag. BMP Loans State of MN	\$ 249,000
EQIP USDA	\$ 200,000
WHIP USDA	\$ 50,000
State Cost-share State of MN	\$ 6,000

In addition to this financial assistance the SWCD offers planning and design assistance in cooperation with conservation partners. Both NRCS and Technical Services Area III provide the SWCD with engineering capabilities for conservation practice design. The SWCD technician provides technical assistance in some non-engineering practices. With these programs the Carlton County SWCD will address high priority water quality problems.

The 2010 cost share allocation to the SWCD was reduced from \$13,000 to near \$6,000. This allocation will be used to implement high priority erosion control and water quality practices throughout the county.

High priority water quality problems are areas where sediment, nutrients, chemicals, or other pollutants discharge to Department of Natural Resources designated protected waters, or any high priority waters as identified in the Compressive Local Water Plan or the SWCD's Compressive Plan, or discharge to a sinkhole or ground water. High priority erosion problems are areas where erosion from wind and/or water is occurring at levels equal to or exceeding 2T, or any area that exhibits active gully erosion, bank erosion, or areas identified in the Comprehensive Local Water Plan or the SWCD's Comprehensive Plan.

2010 BUDGET

Revenues

County Allocation	\$99,900
NRBG Grant	\$7,500
BWSR General Services Grant	\$23,000
Project Administration	\$25,000
Fee for Services	\$15,700
Misc. Income	\$4,900
Total Revenues	\$176,000

Expenditures

Pay Roll	\$141,000
Education and Promo.	\$2,000
Office Operations	\$33,000
Total Expenses	\$176,000