

Nicollet Soil & Water Conservation District
424 South Minnesota Ave.
Saint Peter, MN 56082
507-931-2550



Nicollet SWCD News

July 2006

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The Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District

424 South Minnesota Ave.
St. Peter, MN 56082.
Phone: (507) 931-2550 ext.3
Fax: (507) 931-3792

District Board

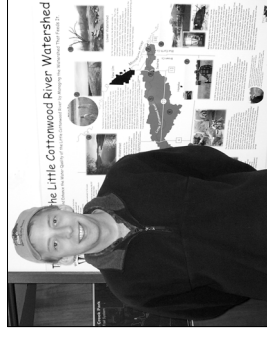
Gerald Rodning, *Chair*
John Kral, *Vice Chair*
William Hohenstein, *Secretary*
Eldon Brown, *Treasurer*
Bruce Hulke, *Member*

District Employees

Kevin Ostermann
District Manager
Blake Honetschlager
District Technician

Get to know your local Farmbill Assistant:

Scott MacLean of the Brown-Nicollet -Cottonwood Water Quality Board has been serving as the Farmbill Assistant for Nicollet County since 2004. Funded in part through the courtesy of a grant from the Nicollet County Soil and Water Conservation District, Scott works to promote and implement the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) throughout the county. Through CRP, landowners can enroll land along drainage ditches and streams, frequently flooded areas and other marginal cropland. The land is taken out of production and seeded down to native grasses and/or flowers. In return, the landowner receives guaranteed annual payments for the length of the CRP contract (10-15 years) and cost share for establishing the cover. Since 2004, Scott has worked with hundreds of landowners and producers in the county assisting with the enrollment of over 700 acres of marginal cropland. If you own or farm marginal cropland and would like to talk to Scott about CRP, give him a call at 507-934-4140. He would be happy to talk to you and can provide payment estimates for your land.



The Little Cottonwood River Watershed

Current Happenings:

General CRP- If you were awarded a contract for the General CRP sign-up, contracts and conservation plans need to be written within the next two months. Contact the NRCS office to get this started.

EQIP- Applications are accepted year around for conservation practices such as nutrient and pest management, residue management, waste storage facilities, waterways and sediment control basins...to name a few of the practices. Stop by the office if you have questions of to fill out an application.

***SEPTIC SYSTEM CONTACT INFORMATION-** Sibley County; Scott Kudelka, (507) 237 5435 ext. 103 / Nicollet County; Tina Rosenstein, (507) 934-0254 / McLeod County; Mark Hiles, (320) 864 1482

Low Interest Loans available for upgrading of Noncompliant Septic Systems*:

Owners of an Individual Sewage Treatment System (ISTS) are eligible for low-interest loans to upgrade their non-conforming septic systems. This low-interest loan program is available to watershed residents for the next three years.

To Be Eligible:

It must serve a residential, non-commercial property located in the High Island Watershed.
Applicant must be a property owner of a non-conforming septic system:

- Discharge to the surface,
- Tiled to drainage or road ditch,
- Discharge to cesspool, seep-age pits or dry wells,
- Less than a 2-foot separation to seasonally saturated soil,
- Lack of a system,
- Does not meet setbacks to existing well.

Not Eligible:

- Refinancing a previously installed system,
- Septic for new homes,
- Non-residential property,
- Project started before design and loan approval,
- Under court order to repair system.

* **Contact information on page 4**

Seven Mile Creek Watershed Project Incentives:

Brown-Nicollet-Cottonwood Water Quality Board (507) 934-4140

In an effort to help protect and enhance the water quality of Seven Mile Creek, special programs are being used to help assist landowners with soil and water conservation practices in this priority watershed.

CRP filter strips along drainage ditches/bluffs and wetland restorations

CRP payments to landowners in the watershed have been averaging about \$157/acre/year for a 10 or 15-year contract.

The watershed project can cover up to 100% of the installation costs and assist with establishment of the CRP.

There are a total of 23 miles of drainage ditches in the watershed. Only about 18% have a perennial vegetated filter strip.

Replacement of open tile intakes

Cost-share is available to help cover up to 75% of the cost of replacing open tile intakes with rock inlets.

On Farm Nitrogen and Phosphorus Demonstrations

Curious how much nitrogen or fertilizer it takes to maximize yield and profit on your own farm?



Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District

Envirothon 2006:

The 2006 Envirothon was held on Wednesday, May 10th at Lake Hanska Park. The topic for this years Envirothon was "Water Stewardship in a Changing Climate."

The Envirothon program provides a unique learning opportunity for students by promoting a desire for students to learn about natural environments. Students are taught skills which can be applied to basic principles and practices of resource management and ecology.

Schools and teachers benefit by providing a learning opportunity to students who excel in science and ecology. The community benefits by having concerned and well-informed citizens who can make good decisions about the environment.

Long lake Conservation Camp:

Each year, the Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District provides scholarship money for students to attend the Long Lake Conservation Camp in Palisade, Minnesota.

"Long Lake Conservation center's mission is to promote the wise use of natural resources and foster proper conservation citizenship by making students aware of the interdependence of humans and the environment." (www.llcc.org, website June, 2006).

Kids aged 7 to 17 can participate in week-long summer camps, day camps, and wilderness trips. Summer programs at Long Lake are in their 40th season.

Environmental education programs for visiting student groups are taught by professional naturalists and are fully accredited. The "Experience" has been operating since 1972, and serves about 6,000 students each year.

Long Lake Conservation Center
28952 438th Ln,
Palisade, MN 56469 (1-800-450-5522)
<http://www.llcc.org>

4-H Demonstration Incentive Award:

This year the Nicollet Soil and Water District will be sponsoring a 4-H Demonstration Incentive Award for local Nicollet County 4-H members. We will be offering \$20.00 for each demonstration.

This years Demonstration Day is scheduled for July 26th at St. Paul's Church in Nicollet, MN.

4-H'ers who choose an incentive award will also present their demonstration at the Nicollet County Fair in August.

For additional information, please contact Kathy Herberg at:
(507) 934-0360

Nicollet County Rainfall:

The Nicollet County precipitation network began in 1988. In 1992 the County Water Planner began assisting the Emergency Management Office with the rainfall network; eventually taking over when more sites were added. A grant by the LCMR, allowed participating landowners to buy National Weather Service approved rain gauges.

This year we have 20 readers during the growing season and during the winter of 2005-2006 we had 8 readers. The readers send their monthly sheets either by mail or email to the county and entered into the Climatology Office data system.

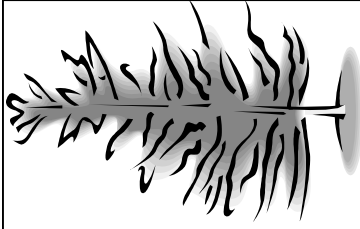
A monthly report is sent to the Backyarders, SWCD, NRCS, Extension and the area Co-ops. You can go to the State Climatology website at <http://climate.umn.edu/> for more weather facts and information.

Tree Sales 2006

The Nicollet SWCD would like to thank everyone who purchased trees this year. Tree sales were a success again this year, with a total of nearly 10,000 trees being sold. The district accepted 125 tree orders from January through the end of March.

If you missed out this year, remember to make a note for next year. The tree program will start in mid January 2007. If you wish to receive a reminder letter next January, please contact the office and leave your name and address information. (507-931-2550 ext. 3). A special thanks to the Nicollet County Fair Board for allowing the SWCD to use their facilities to distribute trees this year.

Also remember, the SWCD does have limited cost-share funds available for windbreak design and installation. This includes new windbreaks as well as replacing old windbreaks. The SWCD will assist you on the design, tree species, spacing, planting, and location of windbreaks.



NRCS New Employee Introduction:

Hi! My name is Stephanie McLain and I am the new District Conservationist for the St. Peter Field Office. I started working here on May 15th, and I am quickly adjusting to the office and to Nicollet County. I began my short and varied career working for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 2002 when I accepted a Soil Conservationist position in Newport, Vermont. This is a long, 30 hour drive from my childhood home on a corn & soybean/dairy farm near Edgerton, MN. After working there for 1 ½ years, I moved to Watertown, South Dakota to be the Soil Conservationist for Codington County. Now two years later, I am excited to be back in Minnesota working here!

I attended college at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, MN where I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Science and Agronomy. I worked for the Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA) in Redwood Falls and at the Pipestone National Monument before working with the NRCS.

My job as District Conservationist is to assist landowners and producers in determining the natural resource concerns present on their land and together find ways to reduce or prevent these concerns. I have experience with many of our conservation programs including Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Environmental

Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), Conservation Security Program (CSP) and the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP). In South Dakota, I worked intensively on rotational grazing and nutrient management planning.

Stop in or call the St. Peter Field Office and introduce yourself. I look forward to meeting you and working on many different projects in the county.



Filing For SWCD Supervisor Candidates is July 4-18th:

Nicollet County citizens interested in influencing natural resource issues at the local level are encouraged to run for supervisor of the Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District.

SWCD supervisor positions are filled through the general election on Nov. 7th. Individuals who wish to be on the ballot in 2006 must file for the election between July 5th and July 18th. Interested citizens should file a Minnesota Affidavit of Candidacy, available from the county auditor, along with a \$20 filing fee. All candidates must be eligible voters, be at least 21 years of age when assuming office, and will have been residents of their nominating district for at least 30 days.

Nominating districts for 2006 in Nicollet County are Districts 2 (Lake Prairie and Traverse Townships, excluding the city of St. Peter), and District 5 (Lafayette, West Newton and Ridgely Townships). For more information on filing, or to find out if you live in a nominating district, please contact Blake Honetschlager at: 507-931-2550 ext. 101.

