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SWCD 2014 Tree Program is in Full Swing

The 2014 Tree List is enclosed in your newsletter for our annual spring tree and shrub sale. There are 27 different varieties of trees and shrubs available as well as weed mats and tree shelters. Some of the available trees include varieties of oak, maple, lilac, pine and spruce. The trees and shrubs are transplants or seedlings that average 24 inches in height. Contact James at 507-434-2603, for information on windbreak planning and available cost share. Check out our web page for more information on the tree program at www.mowerswcd.org.

CRP Re-Enrollment Assistance Available

Landowners with expiring CRP contracts shouldn't be concerned about hassles of re-enrollment. The SWCD is offering assistance with cutting through the red tape of the CRP process and walking landowners through re-enrollment scenarios. Mower County has an influx of contracts expiring this year. The SWCD has directed staff to work individually with interested landowners to assure that they are aware of their updated rental payments. The staff can also assist with any re-alignment needs to fit new equipment or squaring off fields. Rental payments have been updated to reflect market values. Stop in or call Larry at the Mower SWCD if you have a CRP contract expiring in 2014.

Alternative Drainage Opportunities

Several new drainage designs and outlet concepts are available with goals of reducing nutrient loss into our water bodies. The SWCD has opportunities to install these practices for willing landowners. Examples include:

- **Drainage water management**– Water control structures are installed to manage water drainage off the field. During critical growing stages, managing these correctly can make a difference!
- **Constructed Wetland Program**– Ever wanted a pond...without fish? The goal with this program is to eliminate direct tile drainage into ditches, streams, etc. and allow the water to pond up and slowly drain through the soil, which acts as another filtering mechanism. This program gives rental payments, wildlife habitat and increased aesthetic value.
- **Saturated Buffer**– Goal: Reduce runoff and nutrient load reduction. Have an area that floods frequently that you have no plans to farm along a ditch or stream? Does a tile line run underneath and drain into the creek? This practice would install a tile line under the buffer strip and use a structure to push water through the tile line. The goal is to let that vegetation soak up some of the extra moisture from the tile drain line.

Stop in or call Cody at 507-434-2603 for more information.



Check us out on the Web:

www.mowerswcd.org or
www.cedarriverwd.org

Low interest loans available for water pollution prevention projects

The Mower SWCD has funding available for low interest loans to help farmers and rural landowners finance projects that prevent or reduce water pollution.

The AgBMP loan program works with SWCDs and local governments to help farmers, rural landowners and agriculture-related businesses solve pollution problems by offering loans at 3% through participating local lenders. All practices that reduce water pollution are eligible, such as septic systems, upgrading livestock facilities and manure handling equipment, purchasing conservation tillage equipment and improving chemical application and storage methods. Contact Bev at 507-434-2603 for more information.

Utilizing Ravines for Clean Water Ponds

The SWCD has been working with local Watershed Districts to identify and stabilize ravines along streams. The concept has been popular with producers, because the ravine stabilization doesn't require ag land. The projects are located in non-cropland areas and can be designed to provide permanent ponding for wildlife and water quality benefits.



The ravine stabilization projects use the deep channel that has been naturally cut into the bank of the stream. The channel is shaped and a berm is constructed to impound water back behind it. Field runoff is captured in the pond and allowed to settle out before being slowly released through a culvert in the berm.

"These projects are a perfect fit for our agriculture landscape. We can't ask producers to retire productive crop land. These projects are often tucked into the wooded areas, next to the floodplain. It's fun to put those areas to work and find a solution that fits for ag, environment and habitat.", Justin Hanson, Resource Specialist.

For more information on the ravine stabilization projects, contact Justin with the Mower SWCD.

Cost-share Available for Windbreaks

Benefits of Windbreaks

Windbreaks block a driving wind, so that working outside becomes more comfortable in summer and in winter. A good windbreak can reduce home heating costs 10 to 15 percent. Building maintenance costs are reduced also, as a windbreak lessens the sandblasting effects of wind on house paint. A windbreak is also a sound barrier, since a tall dense windbreak will dull the noise of traffic, machinery, and animals. Cost share is available for 3 row windbreaks through the state cost share program, EQIP or CRP. Contact James at the Mower SWCD for more information.



Soil Erosion Ordinance

Mower County has a soil erosion ordinance to protect the public from excessive soil loss that adversely affects the public health, safety, and general welfare by contributing to pollution and other environmental problems. If a complaint is received, the SWCD will evaluate the issue and determine whether the issue falls within the ordinance. If you have an area that frequently washes out, please contact Cody at the SWCD for assistance to correct this issue. We can help you to keep your soil in place.

1408 21st Ave. NW Austin, MN 55912
 (507) 434-2603 Fax: (507) 434-2680
www.mowerswcd.org

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Day/Cell Phone: _____
 E-Mail: _____

— Orders are due by April 1, 2014 — Payment in full is due with the order —

SPECIES	TREE SIZE	PRICE	#ORDERED	AMOUNT
EVERGREENS				
Arborvitae, Techny (Bare Root)	12" to 18"	\$ 2.25		
Arborvitae, Techny (Container Grown)	15" to 18"	\$ 8.00		
Arborvitae, Techny (Container Grown)	18" to 24"	\$ 13.25		
Cedar, Eastern Red (Bare Root)	15" to 18"	\$ 2.25		
Pine, White (Bare Root)	7" to 15"	\$ 1.45		
Spruce, Black Hills (Bare Root)	12" to 18"	\$ 1.95		
Spruce, Black Hills (Container Grown)	15" to 18"	\$ 8.00		
Spruce, Black Hills (Container Grown)	18" to 24"	\$ 13.25		
Spruce, Colorado (Bare Root)	12" to 18"	\$ 1.95		
Spruce, Norway (Bare Root)	7" to 15"	\$ 1.45		
Spruce, White (Bare Root)	7" to 15"	\$ 1.45		
DECIDUOUS (All deciduous are Bare Root)				
Aspen, Quaking <i>New!</i>	18" to 24"	\$ 2.10		
Birch, Paper	2' to 3'	\$ 1.60		
Cottonwood, Male <i>New!</i>	4' to 5'	\$ 2.25		
Crabapple, Red Splendor	2' to 3'	\$ 1.50		
Hackberry	3' to 4'	\$ 1.95		
Linden, American (Basswood) <i>New!</i>	18" to 24"	\$ 2.25		
Maple, Red	2' to 3'	\$ 1.80		
Maple, Sugar	2' to 3'	\$ 1.80		
Oak, Bur	2' to 3'	\$ 1.75		
Oak, Red	2' to 3'	\$ 1.75		
Oak, Swamp White	2' to 3'	\$ 2.10		
SHRUBS (All shrubs are Bare Root)				
Chokeberry, Black	18" to 24"	\$ 1.35		
Cranberry, American	2' to 3'	\$ 2.80		
Current, Golden	18" to 24"	\$ 1.30		
Dogwood, Red Twig	2' to 3'	\$ 2.00		
Elderberry <i>New!</i>	2' to 3'	\$ 1.50		
Hazelnut, American	18" to 24"	\$ 1.60		
Lilac, Common Purple	2' to 3'	\$ 1.95		
Ninebark, Common <i>New!</i>	2' to 3'	\$ 1.70		
Serviceberry, (Juneberry) <i>New!</i>	2' to 3'	\$ 1.65		
TREE CARE PRODUCTS				
Tree Shelters (with Stakes)	4'	\$ 4.00		
Tree Mats (with Staples)	3' x 3'	\$ 1.75		

- Office Use Only -

Amount _____
 Date _____
 Rec. # _____

* Cancellations will not be accepted after February 28th
 * A \$50 fee will be charged for cancelled orders over \$500
 * Orders will be ready for pickup in mid-April
 * Letters will be sent early April with pickup dates

Subtotal _____
 7.375% Sales Tax _____
 Total _____

Make checks payable to: Mower SWCD



Check us out on the web
www.mowerswcd.org

2013 Best Management Practices

<u>Project</u>	<u>Number Completed</u>	<u>Federal/State Funds Cost Share/Incentive paid to landowners</u>
Cover Crop	4100 Acres	\$246,805
Waterways	28 acres waterways	136,415
Sediment Basins	13 basin systems	78,909
Windbreaks	8 Windbreaks	4,900
Side Inlets		9,050
Feedlot Fix		171,000
Total EQIP and State Cost Share		\$647,079
Ag BMP Program	9 loans	\$320,000
	34 Contracts for	
Filter Strips and CRP	154.2 acres	400,920
Constructed Water Retention		186,000
CSP Payments	7	135,925
CRWD Incentive Funds		\$14,000
Total State and Federal Dollars		\$1,703,924
Conservation Plans Written	18,176 acres	
Land treated for Wtr Quality	5961 acres	
Land treatment for Wildlife	530 acres	



Mower SWCD/NRCS

1408 21st Ave NW, Austin, MN 55912
 507-434-2603



Staff (L to R)

- Justin Hanson, SWCD Resource Specialist
- Bev Nordby, SWCD District Manager
- James Fett, SWCD Watershed Technician
- Lisa Buckner, NRCS District Conservationist
- Larry Callahan, SWCD District Technician
- Jeanne Crump, SWCD Administrative Assistant
- Cody Fox, District Technician
- Adam Arndt, NRCS Soil Con Technician

Board of Supervisors

- Jim Gebhardt, Chairman
- Bill Lonergan, Jr, Vice Chair
- Jon Erichson, Secretary/Treasurer
- Rick Gehling
- John Grass Jr

2013 Highlights & Events

- Secured \$162,000.00 disaster funding for field damage from spring rainfall events.
- Sponsored a groundwater meeting and drainage meeting with 50+ in attendance at each meeting.
- Received 29 applications for preventive planting worth \$693,000.00.
- Continued Edge to Field monitoring program.
- Completed construction on a new water retention area/ ravine stabilization.
- Coordinated a clean out of JD 26.
- Administrative and technical services for the Cedar River and Turtle Creek Watershed Districts.
- Provided staff assistance to the Vision 2020 Waterway Committee.
- Continued monitoring 2 stage ditch, bioreactors and constructed wetland for nitrate reduction.
- Hosted Public Nitrate Clinic at Re-fest.
- Continued TMDL work in the Cedar River Basin.

CRWD 1st Major Project Complete-Water Retention

Work on the Cedar River Watershed District's first major flood-control project recently was completed in an effort to hold back stormwater in a northern Mower County ravine. CRWD has constructed several water-quality projects through the use of state Clean Water Legacy funding, but its recent construction on the Ken Trom property along the Cedar River in Lansing Township was the District's first impoundment project focused on flood-damage reduction. With this project, an estimated four tons of sediment will be prevented from entering the Cedar River every year as well as slowing the water down. The Watershed District is now moving onto their next project. Applications for funding other projects are currently in the works.

CRP Incentives

CRWD initiated an incentive program aimed at securing and re-enroll the most critical CRP acres. The District was able to lock down over 70 acres of narrow grass strips along streams of the watershed. These critical areas are for slowing the water down and providing a filter for field runoff. The incentive offered \$50.00 per acre per year. It has turned out to be a great success. Contact Larry for more information at 507-434-2603.

Adopt A River

2013 was the third year the CRWD led a local "Adopt A River" initiative as part of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources statewide program leading to hundreds of pounds of trash being removed from the river. This year we contracted with the Minnesota Conservation Corp to help clean up brush and trees along the river to make the river more navigable for canoes and kayaks. The group also took on a big tire clean up in Austin and just south of town. That project has led to removing 700 tires out of the Cedar over the course of the 3 years.

The Cedar River and its tributaries are quite a resource to our area. The Cedar River's state water trail route was designated for about 25 miles from the village of Lansing (north of Austin at County Road 2) to the Minnesota Iowa border. The Cedar River brings a rich history, beautiful corridor and recreational opportunities, including fishing, canoeing and kayaking.

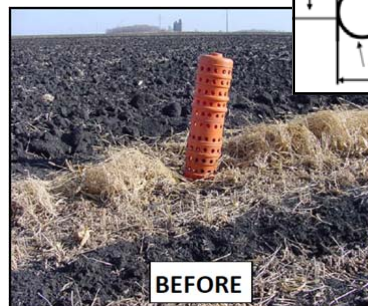
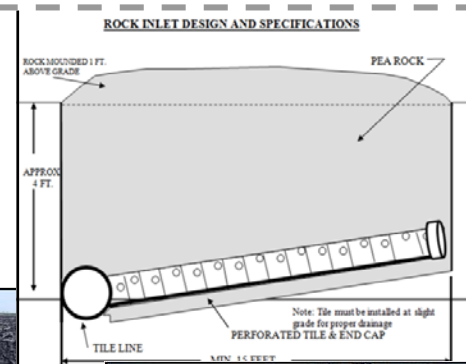
ROCK INLETS REPLACE TRADITIONAL TILE INLETS

ROCK INLETS CAN:

- Reduce sediment and nutrient loss
- Increase drainage capacity and outlet
- Stand up to minor tillage and are easy to farm around

Money is available to cover up to 100% of the costs of Rock Inlet installation on your farm.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE
CEDAR RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT:
507-434-2603**



Financial Assistance Programs: CSP and EQIP

Looking back: In response to the abnormal crop year of 2013, Minnesota NRCS provided additional financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Funding was offered through two funding pools Disaster and Cover Crop/Preventative Planting. These two signups had specific criteria to address the erosion concerns caused by the excessive precipitation received during the months of planting. The Austin Field Office, consisting of NRCS and Mower SWCD, worked tirelessly in getting applications submitted to be considered for funding. The following table shows the amount of applications received and contracts obligated.

EQIP 2013					
Fund Code	County	Applications Received	Contracts Obligated	Obligation Amount	Contracted Acres
Disaster	Mower	22	18	\$162,223.80	2844.6
Cover Crop/ Preventive Planting	Mower	29	2	\$295,020.33	4961.0

Looking ahead: With the beginning of the new fiscal year comes the announcement of new enrollment periods for programs like the Conservation Security Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Although both programs accept applications year round, announced ranking periods give NRCS the ability evaluate applications. To be eligible for this year's enrollment, producers must have their applications submitted to NRCS by the closing date of the program.

- CSP ranking period has a deadline of February 7th.
- EQIP has two designated enrollment periods for 2014.
 - Ranking period 1 has a deadline of February 21st
 - Ranking period 2 has a deadline of March 21st

For more information about these and other programs and services offered by your local NRCS office, please visit the MN NRCS website www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov or contact the office at (507) 433-8429 ext. 3

ASTC-FO and Austin Field Office changes

Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations (ASTC-FO), Kasey Taylor, was selected as the State Conservationist for the state of Delaware. Currently James Fritz is acting in the position until the new ASTC-FO; Dave Copeland arrives on February 24th.

There will be a change in the Austin Field Office as well. Lisa Buckner will be moving to the Waconia Field Office in Carver County. In her absence, Brian DeVetter, District Conservationist in Dodge County will be acting District Conservationist until a permanent selection is made. Brian will begin his collateral new duties on February 23, 2014.

The Austin office will surely miss Lisa, but wish her the best of luck at her new position.

THANK YOU!

The Austin Field Office would like to send a special thank you to each and every one of you that have contacted the office for – be it for financial, technical or programmatic assistance. It is the pleasure of the office to be at the service of the residents of Mower County. We appreciate that you have confidence in us to provide assistance and guidance pertaining to your farming operation, conservation needs or interests and other general questions. We look forward to continuing to provide you with assistance.





Kirk's Corner

With the last of the ballots due in our office or postmarked by Friday, we will have a COC meeting January 23, 2014 to open and count the ballots. Sounds like a new farm bill continues to be finalized in Washington-but may take a little more time. We will accept copies of leases for the 2014 crop year - plan on bringing us copies of your multiple year leases that are good for 2014 too.

CRP — Repairs

Recent rains may have caused damage to your CRP practice. Cost share is available to assist in repairing damage, as long as deemed necessary by NRCS and approved by the County Committee (COC) beforehand. COC policy allows for Cost Share towards repairs on existing CRP practices. The request for Cost Share assistance is authorized one time after establishment of the practice as long as the request is made within 6 months of the disaster event date. The bills / invoices will then need to be submitted within 12 months of the COC approval of the request. All CRP acres need to be maintained according to Technical Standards.

FARMING OPERATION CHANGES

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchase property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to do so can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Making record changes now will save time in the spring.

Some of these changes will require a RECONSTITUTION of our records. Please bring in the changes early to avoid any delays once a farm program has been determined and signup begins.

The FSA Office will need current rental statements or leases for ALL rented land for 2014.

Maintenance of CRP Acres

Filter Strips (CP21), Farmable Wetland / Buffer Programs (CP27/28)

The key to obtaining successful Native Grass plantings on CRP acres is patience. Native grasses take the first year to grow deep roots; this allows the plant to survive periodic droughts that may occur. Because they spend so much energy producing roots you will not see substantial growth above ground the first year.

First & Second Year Maintenance

- Mow at least three times the year of planting and 1-2 times the second year
- Never let the weeds grow taller than 12 inches. This can be accomplished by spot mowing / spraying.
- Mow to a height of 4 to 6 inches
- Flail mowers or stalk chopper work best. If a rotary or sickle mower is used, mow frequently enough so you don't leave large clumps of grass smothering the newly planted natives.

Third Year

If possible, every third year (spring) you should burn the area. This stimulates the native grasses & Forbs and sets back weeds and unwanted invasive grasses. If burning is not an option, continue to control weeds and invasive grasses with spot mowing or spot spraying. Mowing is not recommended during the primary nesting season: May 15th thru August 1st. (Ask for permission to clip noxious weeds during this period).

Waterways (CP8a)

First year maintenance is the same as above for native grasses. For subsequent years, mowing just before May 15th and soon after August 1st will help maintain the integrity of the waterway.

Riparian Buffers (CP22), Shelterbelts (CP16a) and Field Windbreaks (CP5a)

Mowing / spraying herbicides around the trees to help manage weeds are recommended throughout the year, especially in the spring. Supply water during dry conditions and before the first hard frost in the fall so there's adequate moisture available over winter. **AS ALWAYS, IT IS NOT PERMISSABLE TO PLANT OR HARVEST CROPS ON LAND FOR WHICH THERE IS ALSO A CRP CONTRACT. THIS INCLUDES HAYING AND GRAZING.**

MOWER SWCD
1408 21st Ave. NW
Austin, MN 55912

2014 Tree List Enclosed!

Orders from the 2014 Tree list are due by April 1st and are taken on a first come first serve basis. The trees will be available for pick-up at the Mower County Fairgrounds around the 4th week in April. Those that have placed their orders, will be notified by mail of the dates and times.

*The best time to
plant a tree was
20 years ago,
the next best
time is today!*

Order your trees now,
before they get away!



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