



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OTTER TAIL COUNTY'S BUFFER INITIATIVE RECEIVES 2014 COUNTY CONSERVATION AWARD

(St. Paul, MN)— **Otter Tail County's Buffer Initiative** was recognized by Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) during AMC's Annual Conference December 8 in St. Cloud. The County Conservation Award recognizes leadership, innovation and excellence by counties in protecting or improving their natural resources.

Demonstrating a commitment to soil and water health, the Otter Tail County Buffer Initiative will install 50-foot vegetated buffers on 100% of the agricultural land adjacent to the county's lakes, rivers, streams and ditches. The effort will benefit 1,049 lakes and 1,174 miles of waterways by helping keep soil on the land and runoff out of the water.

"Otter Tail County, in partnership with the East Otter Tail and West Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation Districts, has demonstrated a strong commitment to natural resource conservation through this initiative," BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke said. "It's a good investment in restoring and protecting water quality that will benefit not only the county's residents, but everyone who enjoys its many lakes, streams, and rivers."

AMC is a voluntary statewide organization that assists the state's 87 counties in providing effective county governance to the people of Minnesota. It is the mission of the Association to assist in the provision of effective county governance for the people of Minnesota. The association works closely with the legislative and administrative branches of government in seeing that legislation and policies favorable to counties are enacted. In addition, the Association provides educational programs, training, research and communications for county officials.

BWSR is the state soil and water conservation agency, and it administers programs that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our lakes, rivers, and streams; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; and protect wetlands. The 20-member board consists of representatives of local and state government agencies and citizens.

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