

Beltrami

Soil and Water Conservation District

3217 Bemidji Ave N Ste 3,
Bemidji, MN 56601-4328

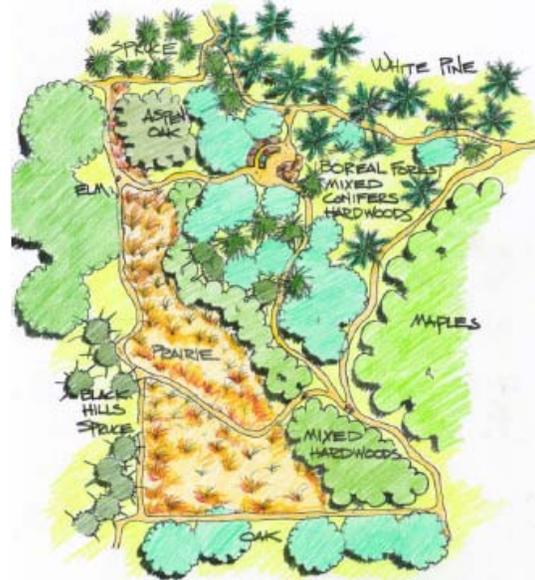
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www.beltramiswcd.org

SWCD Board Meetings: Last Thursday of
Month at 9:00 a.m.



Recent Projects



The Beltrami SWCD recently completed a comprehensive tree installation project at ISD#31 J.W. Smith Elementary School. The school is in a highly urbanized setting, adjacent to residential, light commercial, and the Bemidji State University campus, which results in limited opportunity for first hand contact with nature. The project provides increased environmental science opportunities to the school's students. The plan was to create an outdoor classroom (pictured above and next page), shaped as the state of Minnesota, with trails that follow major river courses and forest cover that geographically represents the vegetation of Minnesota's biomes.

Top 5 Natural Resource Concerns

1. Water Quality and Quantity Management
2. Erosion Control
3. Forage Management
4. Forest Management
5. Wildlife Habitat Management

2009 Revenue

Grants.....\$31,365
Contracts.....\$108,053
Self-generated.....\$190,627
TOTAL.....\$330,045

NOTE: Beltrami County financial support since 2004 has been on a contract for services basis, via an Inter-governmental agreement signed by both the County and SWCD Boards.





This project was made possible by the singularly-unique capacities of the SWCD to bring together multiple partners and provided the planning, implementation, and maintenance. Funding came from multiple sources that included public, private and corporate contributions. This is a story of partnerships and bringing together available resources to build a living classroom that reflects both simple and complex interactions within the natural environment. The legacy created will last for generations and provides an outdoor learning experience for students and the community's residents. Additionally, the completed project will integrate solutions to site-specific environmental issues such as storm water management, green space, and bio-diversity.

The Beltrami SWCD's **stewardship forestry** program encompasses a number of initiatives. Approximately 40 species of low-cost trees and shrubs are available each spring for use in windbreaks, shelterbelts, wildlife habitat plantations or other conservation practices. These species include a variety of potentially high wildlife-value trees and shrubs, and are selected because they are non-invasive, have acclimated seed sources, well-established root systems, and provide suitable species opportunity for all soils/drainage applications. The District has provided over one million trees during the life of their tree program.

A **lakeshore owner's** property management handbook providing clear information on implementing stewardship-based management on their lakeshore was written and made available. A subsequent Shoreline Buffer Restoration Guide was written and published to help lakeshore owners return their shoreline to a more natural condition. Over 2,000 copies of each publication have been distributed since 2006, with another edition published in 2008.

The Beltrami SWCD developed its own Shoreline Seed Mix for **shoreline restoration** efforts. This perennial mix contains 19 species of native forbs and 5 species of native grasses selected for their erosion control and wildlife habitat characteristics. The mix has species that will do well in a variety of site conditions, including part sun to full sun, and sandy to organic soils.

Provide technical leadership in implementing Beltrami County's Comprehensive **Local Water Management Plan (CLWMP)**. Annual surface water testing has gathered water quality information on over 75 lakes and rivers. Other successful highlights include a strong water quality protection component in the District's programs, riparian erosion control assistance, urban runoff and storm water management.

Future Projects

An initiative to address the **Mississippi River Headwaters impairments** is underway. Certain areas of the Mississippi River contain dissolved oxygen levels too low to support life, and are subsequently listed as impaired for fisheries. Lake Irving will be listed on the 303(d) impaired waters listing for nutrients in 2010, elevating the priority of this issue. The SWCD is aggressively seeking funding to address these impairments.

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