

Koochiching

Soil and Water Conservation District

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*SWCD Board Meeting: 1st Monday at
6:30 p.m. Nov-Apr and 7:00 p.m. May-Oct;
Courthouse Basement*



Top 5 Natural Resource Concerns

1. Shoreline Stabilization/Restoration along Rainy River, Rainy Lake, and Littlefork River
2. Forest Management Education/Stewardship Planning
3. Wetland Education/Technical Assistance
4. Sedimentation/Erosion Control
5. Wildlife Habitat Improvement

2008 Revenue

County	\$110,234
State	\$34,326
Charges for Services	\$29,424
Interest Earnings	\$5,769
Miscellaneous	\$4,011
Total	\$183,764

Recent Projects

Ivan Crawford Erosion Control Project:

The Ivan Crawford landing is a public water access that, as a result of frequent use, became unstable along the shoreline of Rainy River.

The Koochiching SWCD provided cost share assistance to address the erosion and sedimentation problem. This project utilized a combination of concrete blankets and rip rap, something that was new for us in this area. The results are shown below.



Before



After

Construction time: 3 days
Total Project cost: \$12,519

Living Snow Fence Initiative:

At the 2009 Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (MASWCD) State Convention, the Koochiching SWCD was recognized with an award for implementing a county-wide Living Snow Fence Initiative. This program, which was funded by the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, provided landowners cost-share assistance to establish living snow fences along high-priority highways. Increased public safety, fewer plow trucks on the road, reduced shipping delays for goods & services, improved wildlife habitat, and decreased heating expenses for homeowners are just a few examples of the benefits these living snow fences provide. The lessons learned over the past few decades have provided the SWCD with a new plan that will protect roads from drifting snow and provide better public safety for all who travel throughout Koochiching County. A snow trap survey was completed for the county which identified stretches of highway that received increased snow drifting. Landowners were contacted through an outreach project and the response was incredible. In 2009, over six thousand feet was enrolled in the living snow fence initiative.

City Wetland Plan:

In 2009, the city of International Falls was provided with a grant from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources to complete a city-wide comprehensive wetland protection and management plan. The ultimate goal of the plan was to maintain and improve the quality, quantity, and biological diversity of the wetland resources within city limits and also to provide for prioritization of existing wetlands and strategically select replacement sites. The plan, which involves input from local governments, BWSR, Army Corps of Engineers, and the public, was an important step for the city in its ultimate goal of sustainable economic development. The SWCD will continue to assist with the wetland inventory and assessment of existing wetlands. When completed, this plan will provide the local government with the resources it needs to stimulate economic development and at the same time, meet all of the requirements of the regulatory programs.

Future Projects:

White Cedar Preservation:

Currently, the SWCD is researching a wetland mitigation pilot project for Koochiching county that involves the preservation of white cedar in the county. Not only will this provide the county with wetland mitigation credits for future development, it will also provide for a sustainable future of our declining white cedar areas. SWCD staff, along with the county's forestry department, are working to locate areas that fit into both the county's wood harvest goals and the preservation program of our county wetland flexibility plan and ordinance.

Big Fork River Watershed Assessment:

For fiscal year 2010, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency plans to complete an Intensive Watershed Assessment on the Big Fork River Watershed. The SWCD has submitted a Surface Water Assessment Grant application to the MPCA to complete the inventory work within the watershed. This work involves the investigation of several parameters for water quality at selected points throughout the watershed. If approved, the SWCD will begin training with the Lake of the Woods SWCD staff to complete the inventory work.



Board Members

Allen Linder	Chair	(218) 875-2195	3309 Hwy 217, Ray, MN 56669
Ralph Lewis	Vice Chair	(218) 634-2048	10990 Hwy 11, Birchdale, MN 56629
Wayne Meyers	Member	(218) 278-6730	4269 CO RD 79, Little Fork, MN 56653
Bernie Uran	Treasurer	(218) 897-5586	11881 Hwy 71, Northome, MN 56661
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