

Sibley

Soil and Water Conservation District

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*SWCD Board Meeting: Second Tuesday of Month
at 4 p.m.*



Top 5 Natural Resource Concerns

1. Maintain and improve water quality
2. Reduce soil loss in critical areas of Sibley County
3. Promote education on the wise use of soil and water resources
4. Promote preservation and protection of wetlands
5. Improve wetland and upland wildlife habitat

2008 Revenue

Total \$265,411

Recent Projects



Structural erosion control measures; terraces, water and sediment control basins, diversions, and waterways have been established by the Sibley SWCD through its annual State Cost-Share allocation. Combining state funding with the USDA EQIP funding has brought about the implementation of several multi-terrace projects, which would have taken several years to complete if using only the state monies. Since 2005, sealing of unused wells has been added to the cost-share docket. About 30 wells have been sealed to-date.

Educational field days, demonstration plots, one-on-one interaction with cooperators, and utilization of Agricultural Best Management Practice Loan Program funds to purchase equipment have brought about positive changes. For the money, conservation tillage offers the best conservation bang-for-the-buck of any soil saving, soil and water quality practice out there.



A wetland restoration was constructed and completed in 2003 through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). This 161.3-acre project (pictured) includes 69.8 acres of native prairie upland vegetation and 91.5 acres of wetland restorations/enhancements. This is the third largest easement that the SWCD manages, and the largest wetland restoration in Sibley County. The location is along State Highway #19 and is highly visible to the passing motorist.

Conservation tillage practices have been monitored and promoted by SWCD staff since 1978. In those early years, less than 5 percent of the county's cropland was planted into what could be considered conservation tillage. Today more than half of the planted acres are using some form of reduced tillage.

Thirty percent are practicing conservation tillage, leaving 30 percent or greater residue after planting.

Watershed projects completed recently include a water and sediment control basin that was designed by SWCD staff and constructed using High Island Creek Watershed Clean Water Partnership Phase II Implementation funds. The project is located near a major county highway, just outside of the city of Arlington. It is hoped that this visibility will generate further interest in conservation work throughout the watershed.

Surface inlet improvement projects have been promoted by SWCD staff as alternatives to open tile intakes. Rock tile inlets, slotted riser pipes, and more intensive tile patterning are the methods being used to replace the traditional open inlet. With an estimated density of one open intake for every eight acres of cropland, there is plenty of work remaining to be treated in Sibley County. It is felt that the open intake is playing a large role in sediment delivery to the surface waters of the county.

Incentive monies are available to producers in the Rush River and High Island Creek Watersheds of Sibley, Nicollet, and McLeod Counties, to bring about positive changes.

Future Projects

Three water and sediment control basins and one diversion project are currently on the drawing board and will likely be installed this season.

Board Members

David Trebelhorn	Chair	(507) 647-5518	501 N Carver, Winthrop, MN 55396
Robert Nielsen	Secretary	(507) 326-5695	19366 331st Ave, Green Isle, MN 55338
Tom Pfarr	Treasurer	(507) 964-2537	23906 387th Ave, Arlington, MN 55307
Gary Schafer	Member	(507) 834-6474	780 Birch Ave, Gibbon, MN 55335
Paul Wiemann	Vice Chair	(507) 964-2989	44359 246th St, Arlington, MN 55307