



LAKE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

616 THIRD AVENUE, TWO HARBORS, MN 55616

P: (218) 834-8370

WWW.CO.LAKE.MN.US/SWCD

Minutes

Regular Meeting of the Board of Supervisors

Thursday, May 10, 12 noon

408 1st Avenue, Two Harbors, MN 55616

- Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:07 PM by Chair Todd Ronning.
Present: Ronning – Haus- Omarzu -Sagen
Absent: Brodigan
Staff: Tucker-Passe-Nelson
Guests: Sellnow, Loeffler
- Agenda: **Motion by Sagen and seconded by Haus to approve the agenda. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.**
- Minutes: **Motion by Sagen and seconded by Omarzu to approve the minutes for April 12, 2018 meeting as printed. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.**
- Financial and administrative reports:
- Treasurers Report: **Motion by Omarzu and seconded by Sagen to approve the treasures report as presented. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.**
- **Guest Updates:**
 - NRCS Report: Jon Sellnow's reported the workgroup went well, the Knife River watershed was selected as a priority. Lake County has 33 EQUIP contracts – 21 Eligible for funding, the remaining ones still need a plan written for them.
 - BWSR: Loeffler explained the PRAP process that will be taking place next month. It is a level II, they will be meeting with the SWCD and County Staff in the morning of June 14th and present at the Board Meeting.

District Manager:

Strategic Planning: We will meet next month at 11:00 to set some goals from the main points of the plan.

Silver Bay project update: Passe updated the Board on the wetland permits. **Motion by Omarzu and seconded by Haus to approve and sign the Cost-share voucher for the City of Silver Bay payment for the Stantec invoice. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.**

Cost Share Contract: Passe is working with a landowner in Ely for a planting buffer on the lake shore. **Motion by Omarzu and seconded by Haus to approve and sign the Cost-share contract with Sue Duffy for up to \$2400 for a Riparian Herbaceous Cover in Fall Lake Township. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.** Nelson reported that the change order in the MPCA grant for the water monitoring in the Cloquet watershed has not yet been approved to include the payment for water samples for lakes and the E. coli samples. The E. coli samples we will put off until June but the Cloquet ones will cost about \$176 for the month of May. **Motion by Haus and seconded by Omarzu to pay the lab fees until the change order is in place. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.**

Envirothon: 39 Teams took part and Cook County took first and third place and Two Harbors took second place and “Team Spirit” award. The State competition is on May 21st. The School asked if the District could help them with travel expenses. **Motion by Omarzu and seconded by Haus to contribute \$100 to offset travel expenses.**

Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried. North St Louis SWCD will take over organizing this next year while Emily is off. Hogfeldt reported information he has gathered about use of safety radios. He will get more information. No action was taken.

Motion by Haus and seconded by Omarzu to approve Tucker attending the June Admin Training in Brainerd (\$65 fee). Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.

Correspondence: Tucker received a request from the radio station to use our meeting space for their monthly meetings. They are planning to get a formal written request. **Motion by Haus and seconded by Omarzu to approve the radio station to use our space this month and pending a written agreement for the future. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.** We could use this as in-kind match. We should develop a policy for building use.

Request from Aitkin SWCD to support a resolution for and Area Forester. We do not have enough information so no action taken.

Area III Resolution meeting June 6th: **Motion by Omarzu and seconded by Sagen to approve Haus to attend and any staff that are interested. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.**


Supervisor Committee Reports and Concerns:

Audit Committee: Motion by Sagen and seconded by Haus to approve the Audit Committee signed 27 Checks and 10 direct payments for a total of \$43,912.79. Affirmative: Ronning, Haus, Omarzu, Brodigan, Sagen. Abstain: None. Carried.

Reminder again about the filing period for Supervisors

Motion to adjourn, next meeting will be June 14th at Noon at 408 1st Avenue.

Special Strategic planning meeting at 11AM



Todd Ronning, Chairman

Submitted by:

Karen R. Tucker, District Manager



Doug Haus, Secretary

For:

Doug Haus, Lake SWCD



May 10, 2018

NRCS Conservation Report: Lake SWCD

Jon Sellnow, District Conservationist

Programs:

- 14 Active EQIP Contracts
- 1 Active CSP Contract
- 2018 EQIP Applications
 - Carlton: 34 – **28 Eligible**
 - Cook: 16 – **15 Eligible**
 - Lake: 33 – **21 Eligible**
 - South St. Louis: 45 – **34 Eligible**
- 2018 RCPP-EQIP Applications
 - Carlton: 12
 - South St. Louis: 17
- 2018 CSP Applications
 - Carlton: 4
 - Lake: 1
 - South St. Louis: 7
- 2019 Local Work Group

Minnesota NRCS Reorganization:

- Plan rollout on May 11
- Town hall meeting for review and discussion on May 15
- Comment period from May 15 to May 29

Meetings, Trainings, and Events:

- April 12 – Lake SWCD and LWG Meeting
- April 17 – Carlton LWG Meeting
- April 18 – NCPP Listening Session
- April 18 – South St. Louis SWCD
- April 19 – Cook LWG Meeting
- April 20 – Technical Training Team Meeting
- April 20 – Integrated Erosion Tool Training
- April 24 – South St. Louis LWG Meeting
- April 26 – DC Meeting
- April 30 – Area Soil Health Team Meeting
- May 2 to 3 – North Shore Tour
- May 3 – Cook SWCD
- May 10 – Lake SWCD

Upcoming Items:

- May 11 – Minnesota Reorganization Plan
- May 14 – Carlton SWCD
- May 15 – Town Hall Meeting
- May 16 – South St. Louis SWCD
- May 17 – Lakewood Town Hall
- May 29 – EOD Kristopher Mueller
- June 5 to 7 – NRCS Leadership Team Meeting and Field Tour
- June 7 – Cook SWCD
- June 14 – Lake SWCD

Acronym Codes

- EQIP = Environmental Quality Incentives Program
- WHIP= Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
- CSP = Conservation Stewardship Program
- GLRI = Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
- RCPP = Resource Conservation Partnership Program
- ACEP = Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
- WRE = Wetland Reserve Easement
- LWG = Local Work Group
- ARC = Area Resource Conservationist
- DC = District Conservationist
- RFP = Request For Proposal
- FPAC = Farm Production and Conservation
- CIG = Conservation Innovation Grant



DISTRICT MANAGER MONTHLY UPDATE APRIL TO MAY 3

**KAREN TUCKER, DISTRICT MANAGER
LAKE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

- Created cover sheet for Cost share folders
- Created monthly to do list (Plan to add to it throughout the year as things come up)
- Minutes and agenda (Up-loaded to the website for last month)
- Payroll/reviewed timesheets

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

- Attended a training for time management, several things to pass along to staff
- Helped Sonja interview the 2 applicants for the 6-month AIS position. Both were excellent candidates and we decided after reviewing the budget to hire them both.
- Gathered paperwork for new hires
- Sonja and I met with Christine McCarthy about AIS spending and plans to renew the contract for next year
- Met with MCIT about Insurance coverage
- Helped with Envirothon

ITEMS OF NOTE AND/OR MOTION NEEDED

Motion to approve Administrative training in Brainerd for June 27-28
City of Silver Bay Voucher approve and sign

Engineering Monthly Update

April 5 – May 2, 2018

Prepared by Derrick Passe



WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT

Shoreview Road – Assisted County highway in Preparation of Permit Application

Beaver River Restoration

- Wetland Alteration Application – Discussed with TEP
 - o Will be approved with conditions May 11.
 - o USACOE Will go out for 10 day public notice.
 - Comments close 5/5/2018
 - Comments from SWCD and City about urgency of making decision (Cost and funding expiration)
- Schedule
 - o Design Plans – (Final by May 1)
 - o WCA TEP Action Deadline – May 11, 2018
 - o Bidding (May 15 – June 1)
 - o Award (June or July) based on Bidding
 - o Construction (July 15th – September 15th) (4 – 6 weeks)

Prospector's Loop – ATV Trail still in wetland Process – Combines DNR and BWSR Jurisdiction across County Boundaries.

Dan Ziemet –Getting all his credits released to the State Wetland Bank.

COST SHARE

John Chapek – Met with Shoreview Natives and Chapeks.

- Plan to do soil import and mat on May 14th.
- Recommended asking for one week extension on May 15th date in Cost Share Agmt due to late Spring.

Vold/Bruzik Sites – Ongoing concern from Property Owners on Burlington Bay regarding slope failures.

- Past SWCD Projects on Burlington Bay include sites adjacent to them (both sides as well as TH Campground.
- Contact BWSR, USACOE, County, DNR about potential funding sources
- Contact TSA to discuss engineering solutions.

STORMWATER

2018 Coastal Grant – E. coli sampling – Prepared work plan for Sampling

- Working with UM – Mike Sadowsky to refine sampling (DNA) Plan and Sample Preparation.

Silver Bay – City has good data on existing utilities.

- Extensive Tree planting planned for 2018. Strong need to overlay tree locations with Utility location to avoid conflicts. Indicated availability of CCMI Crew from SWCD to assist for a couple of days with our cleanwater crew days.

MPCA CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

WICOLA Spring Rendezvous – Presented with Dan Schutte on How to Plan and Maintain a native plant shoreline. 31 Attendees with widespread interest in potential costshare projects.



Metals Sampling – Worked with WICOLA and USGS on Grant Application for Heavy Metals sampling in Birch and White Iron Lake.

LAKE COUNTY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Silver Creek Site – Site has had extensive grading (some in wetlands) without Grading Permit.

Dan Lindgren – Plan for Gravel Pit Creation

Huseby Site – Lax Lake – Variance request

Gortner Site – Lax Lake – Lake Setback Variance

FEMA Flood Elevations for Lake Superior – Presentation on draft flooding potential from Lake Superior

- Does not address slope failure due to slumping, focus on structure and insurance for flood protection.

Rainy River Citizen Engagement

- Ely Community Resource AIS monitoring projects
 - (Ongoing) Native Plankton Community project aimed at characterizing the current plankton community in Shagawa and Fall Lakes to see how it responds to spiny waterflea colonization. We are exposing several students per week to AIS/plankton sampling protocols, laboratory techniques, microscope use, and dichotomous key use.
 - Project has been expanded from just the “Science Club”, to be a regular part of Biology class. This means more students involved and more data collected.
 - Plankton samples are collected and delivered to school weekly.
 - Held meetings with ECR to “flesh out” summer 2018 plans. Bo Dereme (Ely HS Science teacher) will be assisting myself and students with the spiny waterflea and rusty crayfish projects throughout the summer.
- Followed up on report of Rainbow Smelt (invasive) caught in Bass Lake. Specimen was collected, identified and reported to Tower DNR fisheries managers. This is significant because waters from Bass lake flow Low Lake, the Range River, Basswood Lake and on down the boarder lakes to the Rainy River and beyond.
- Contacted citizen lake monitoring volunteers regarding schedule and plans for upcoming sampling season. Dates are set and coolers with sampling supplies have been received.
- Calibrations and maintenance on water quality sondes.
- Discussions with MPCA over summer 2018 data collection plans in Lake County. We will be sampling several streams as part of the WRAPS process.
- Organized MPCA intern schedules.
- Developing work plan for new assistant Rainy River Headwaters Outreach Coordinator, Liz Anderson.
- Signed up to run an aquatic biology and sampling techniques teaching station at Wolf Ridge’s “Bio-Blitz” event.
- Working with DNR and USFS to coordinate an oxy-thermal pinch study on 7 lakes in Lake County. These are lakes that are thought to be particularly sensitive to climate change in that the habitable area for fish in summertime is “pinched” into an increasingly thin zone which is cold enough (deeper), but also has adequate oxygen (shallower). USFS to purchase the temperature loggers and help with field work (James Anderson). DNR to provide various sampling equipment and run analysis. Lake SWCD (me) to lead field work, and compile data.
- Attended WICOLA board meeting.



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April, 2018 Forestry Report

Tim Byrns

NRCS Forestry Planning and Practice Assistance RFP- "Arrowhead Forest Partnership"

- Grant submitted to NRCS for an additional \$30,000.00 service agreement to assist NRCS in their existing workload.

Forestry Assistance

- Dan Schutte- spruce budworm treatment certification 7 acres
- Brad Ronning- spruce budworm treatment certification 3 acres
- Sue Bott- planning for red pine and white spruce thinning
- Leanne Jacoby- 96 acres, Forest Stewardship Planning
- Rodney and Julie Johnson- 90 acres, Forest Stewardship Planning Request
- Sara Quetico- 80 acres, Forest Stewardship Planning Request
- Mark Udenberg- contracting for balsam removal
- Lee Lind- tree selection
- Matt Meyer- riparian planting on White Iron Lake

EQIP Update

- First round of funding complete 9 out of 33 applications have been funded

Training/Meetings

- April 12- NRCS Local Workgroup Meeting- identified forestry conservation practices and the Knife River watershed as priorities for Farm Bill Assistance. NRCS, DNR, BWSR, and SWCD staff were in attendance.
- April 25- Advocates of the Knife River Watershed Meeting- Presented on Cost-Share opportunities for private landowners

Engineering Assistance

- Seegog Bank Stabilization- submitted updated plans to public works department
- 6th Ave Skunk Creek bank erosion- assessed bank instability with TH public works director



AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES REPORT APRIL 5 – MAY 2, 2018

**SONJA SMERUD, AIS COORDINATOR
LAKE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

OUTREACH

- AIS Map 2018 Edits – Northern Wilds completing for reprint
- Contract with Wolf Ridge ELC for summer Water watchers programming finalized & programming meeting with 4-H Extension, Wolf Ridge
- Lease agreement to Lake County Board for CD3 station (& application to the MNDNR)
- Initial work on AIS lesson “trail kits” (acquired some materials)
- Radio Interview on KTWH – April 23rd
- Private Watercraft Inspection Program Visit/Presentation with NSL SWCD & VLA at Fortune Bay – April 26th
- AIS Subcommittee Meeting facilitation – April 16th
- AIS Focus Group held in Silver Bay and Two Harbors, respectively, to gain feedback on AIS Prevention Plan update
 - Limited participation
 - Circulated CBSM surveys to gain indication of AIS behaviors (3 respondents)
- Bent Brewstillery Crayfish Boil partnership with MNSeaGrant – May 26th
 - Paul trapping the week prior, help from others
 - Compensation from Brewery for our trapping effort
 - We will help coordinate youth engagement

MONITORING, ASSESSMENTS, GRANTS

- Hired Elizabeth Gray & Al Robertsen as watercraft inspectors. Liz Anderson and Zach Stewart as Water Resource Technicians – Zach will oversee inspections this summer and Liz will oversee crayfish trapping/research in Ely. Haley (CC Apprentice) will start end of May as well.
 - Interviews and Reference checks
- Internal HR resource development/files with new hires
- Watercraft Inspection Level 1 Training – certified May 3rd

ITEMS OF NOTE AND/OR MOTION NEEDED

- Review hiring/budget with Water Resource Technicians



WATER PLAN REPORT APRIL 5 – MAY 2, 2018

**SONJA SMERUD, WATER PLANNER
LAKE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Grant writing workshop with Minnesota Council of Non-profits – May 1st
 - Conservation Partners Legacy Grant drafted (August due date)
- New shirts (w/logos) and pens for staff & general district outreach
- Local work group meeting with NRCS, BWSR, partners – April 12th
- WICOLA Winter Meeting – shoreline restoration presentation – April 7th
 - wrote email follow up with Derrick and Shoreview Natives

LAKE SUPERIOR NORTH ONE WATERSHED, ONE PLAN

- City of Silver Bay Stormwater Presentation & 1W1P update to Silver Bay City Council
 - Collected surveys about a regional stormwater protection team
- Meeting with EOR & Quotes for Silver Bay – April 11
- Contract with Wolf Ridge ELC finalized > establishes framework for future joint curriculum development for Lake Superior

ITEMS OF NOTE AND/OR MOTION NEEDED

- Review PRAP – BWSR visit in June



Conservation Outreach Coordinator Report

May, 2018

Rainy River Headwaters Civic Engagement

- Worked on website redesign (not live at this time).
- Organized septic system workshop with Christine McCarthy, and worked with Ross on designing flyers for the events.
- Ordered YSI calibration solutions and probes. Calibrated sondes. Contacted volunteers on lakes in the Cloquet River watershed to plan for sampling starting this month (May).
- Prepared presentation for the Pequaywan Lake Association.
- Completed invoicing.

Coastal Program

- Interviewed Sonja and Mackenzie live on KTVH during their fund drive. We talked about the cleanup and invasive species.
- Along with Castle Danger Brewery and the City of Two Harbors, organized and held the fourth annual cleanup (no longer known as Sweep the Skunk ☺). The event was attended by a little over 70 people, including some of our board members (thank you!) and over 1500 pounds of trash were collected.

Stormwater

- Completed STAR grant final report.
- Read and discussed information on filtering water samples to test for DNA in the fall. Set up a sampling plan with Pace laboratories in Duluth. Arranged funding to come from the MPCA RRHW CE grant for E. coli sampling this summer.

Envirothon

- Prepared for Envirothon (organizing volunteers, contacting teachers, ordering and picking up t-shirts, printing out tests and other materials, making arrangements with catering, etc.). We have 44 teams registered this year, as well as 47 students serving as alternates, so we needed to find two extra judges (thank you, Doug!).

May 2, 2018



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Minnesota Message

*Minnesota Acting State Conservationist, Curtis Elke
St. Paul, Minnesota*

Hello Team Minnesota

My time in Minnesota has been very rewarding thus far. Thank you!

I plan to visit as many field offices as possible in these next two months. I always learn so much in the field and out there on the ground. Together we are all accomplishing great things on the land and for the customer. I ask all of you to continue focusing on the customer experience and effective conservation technical assistance. This is what our customers want, and what we need to provide with strength.

Although Minnesota has advertised several key positions and we are currently in the process of interviewing and selection, I wish to assist all of you even more. I am approving another round of details in our state while we patiently wait for the opportunity to hire again. Thank you to those serving on a detail, and thank you to those who are helping fill the staffing gaps.

We received 18 project proposals totaling over \$8 million in requests through the competitive RFP Grant/Agreement advertisement. We are currently ranking applications and will fund proposals that will assist us with the extra workloads we are willing to hand off. It is our goal to spend more time on the workloads in which we have expertise, and hand off other workloads to traditional and non-traditional partners. I believe this is a good strategy and will strengthen Team Minnesota!

On May 11 at 10:00 a.m., I will reveal the Minnesota Reorganization Plan to NRCS staff. I am excited to share the details with you! This plan has been developed with everyone in mind. You will also hear me explain our next steps and process of implementation. I'm looking forward to your feedback during the comment period.

So, continue with your positive outlooks and attitudes as we travel together on a new Minnesota journey. Please take good care of yourselves and your families.

What you do matters!

*Curtis Elke
Acting State Conservationist*

Inside This Issue

Message from the State Conservationist

Updates from:

- Ecological Sciences
- Engineering
- Soils

Public Affairs – Minnesota Employee
Spotlights

Upcoming Training



Ecological Sciences

Watershed selection criteria has been developed by the watershed subcommittee of the Minnesota State Technical Committee to provide criteria and guidance for NRCS local staff and partners. Through the use of the subcommittee, feedback was incorporated into the watershed selection criteria. There are three sections of criteria:

- Documentation of pollution issues and planning,
- Local readiness, and
- Multiple benefits - high needs and/or opportunities.

This watershed selection criteria will be used when watershed sections are made for Minnesota NRCS watershed-based program selections. Local staff and partners are encouraged to use this document to promote strong communication to prepare ahead of time. Minnesota NRCS wants to thank the following subcommittee partners and agencies who played key roles in the development of this criteria: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, University of Minnesota, Board of Water and Soil Resources, Red River Watershed Basin Collation, Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, NRCS Program leads, and Minnesota NRCS's Shannon Carpenter for her leadership.

For additional information, please visit the MSTC Watershed Selection Criteria posted to the Minnesota NRCS website:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/mn/water/watersheds/>

The National Conservation Planner Designation Resources SharePoint site has additional materials for those interested in becoming a certified planner. It also has resources for partners who do not have access to SharePoint and AgLearn guides for supervisors.

https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/NRCS_PROGRAMS/Pages/Conservation-Planner-Designation-Resources.aspx

Engineering

The NRCS Engineering Team had a meeting April 17-19 with state partners from BWSR and TSA in Baxter, Minnesota. NRCS state office staff presented on topics ranging from JAA, subsurface geological investigations, and edge of field water quality practices for drainage. The meeting was a great opportunity to network, share the latest technology, and discuss recent projects and experiences with peers throughout the state.

FOTG Modernization: There was a SCE teleconference for the Central Region on April 24, and this was one of the topics discussed and included the following items of note:

- Plan for a national database of Conservation Practice Standards that will include ALL states' amended versions.
- The national database will require a standardized method/format for states to include their amendments.
- The national database will eventually be incorporated into the Conservation Practice Documents-Document Management System (CPD-DMS); the basic framework is expected to be completed by June.
- CPD-DMS national roll-out will include "Train the Trainer" sessions to facilitate adoption by the states.

Dave Jones (Area Engineer in Thief River Falls, MN) has been selected to become Minnesota's State Conservation Engineer. Dave is scheduled to report on June 24. Congratulations Dave!

Amanda Deans (Hydraulic Engineer in Saint Paul, MN) had her baby girl on April 16. Congratulations Amanda!

Soils

FSA CRP Rental Rates

Local field offices have been relaying questions received from FSA offices about map units missing CRP rental rates. The Resource Soil Scientists have been working with FSA to determine which group these "missing soils" should belong so FSA can determine the correct rental rate. In some cases, these soils were involved in the update process by the MLRA staff and were "new" to FSA. In others, the soils did not transfer in the national process of automatically updating FSA's soils database. If any field office receives questions from FSA regarding CRP rental rates, please contact one of the Resource Soil Scientists.

313 and Subsurface Investigation Updates

The soils staff is assisting the NRCS engineering and geology staff in updating the 313 standard and Minnesota subsurface investigation guide. We are looking at soils and landscapes to determine what level of investigation may be needed. Soil and landscape features being considered include:

- Karst Topography
- Coarse Soils (sandy and gravelly)
- Soils with high water tables
- Soils with fractured glacial till

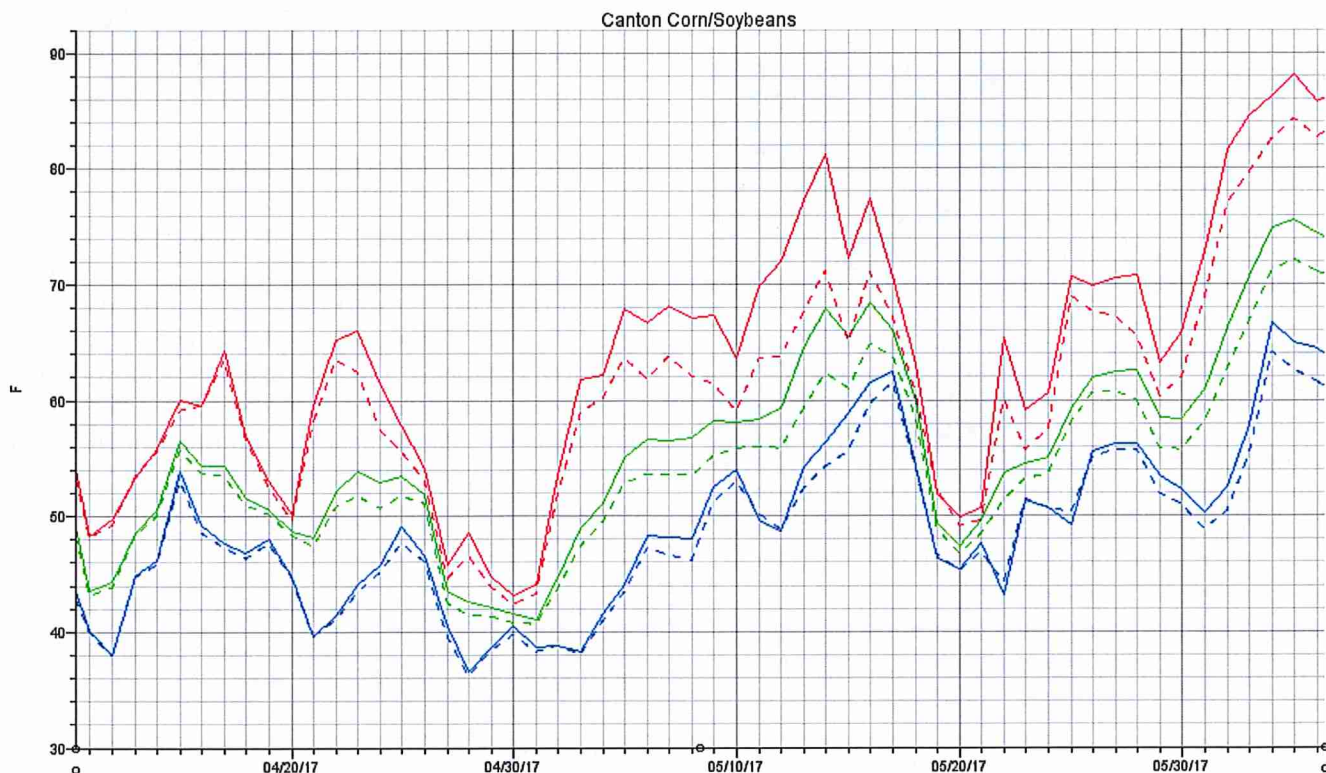
The collaboration between soil scientists, engineers and geologist will result in a process that will provide the correct level of data to be collected and reviewed in the most efficient and effective means.

Soil Health

Submitted by Dan Nath, Resource Soil Scientist, Rochester.

In the world of soils and soil health, we've heard for years that no-till and cover crops makes the soil colder and

wetter in the spring. Soil scientists in Minnesota questioned if it was really that different, so we decided to test that assumption. Soil temperature is affected by many management factors (e.g., soil moisture, albedo, and residue). We set out to test as many different variables across the state as possible. In the next weeks, we'll be sharing some of our results. The first site we are looking at is in Fillmore County from April 11 to June 5. The soil is deep fine-silty loess on uplands with a ten-year history of no-till. With this comparison, we were interested in seeing how corn and soybean residue and plants affect soil temperature at two inches. On the graph (below), the solid line is the field that was soybeans and is planted to corn, while the dashed line was corn planted to soybeans. Because of the diurnal changes, we collected data every two hours and summarized the data, showing red as the daily maximum, green as average, and blue as minimum. When looking at the critical temperature of 50 degrees and below, the differences are very small and controlled by precipitation rather than by residue (May 1, 18). In the fields that were planted and the crops had not yet emerged, emergence was a problem for everyone regardless of management during these rain events.



MLRA

The Soil Science Division had two very prominent members retire in Minnesota.

Michael Whited, Regional Director RO10 in St. Paul, Minnesota, retired March 30. Michael had over 35 years of experience. His grandchild will play a major role in his new adventure.

Tom Neuenfeldt, MLRA Soil Survey Office Leader in Fergus Falls and acting MLRA Office Leader in Bemidji, Minnesota, retired April 27. Tom had 33 years of total time in serving his country in the Army and with the Department of Agriculture - SCS/NRCS. He too plans to spend his free time hunting and enjoying time with his grandchildren.

Although we are sad that we will no longer have their companionship and leadership, they will always be remembered as important elements of our careers. Their interactions and involvement in our lives molded our experiences and enhanced our wisdom.

Public Affairs

Minnesota Employee Spotlight

Pat Gehling, District Conservationist

My name is Pat Gehling, and I am the District Conservationist at the Foley Field Office in Benton County where I've worked for the last 25 years. Prior to working in Benton County, I spent time in Portage County, Wisconsin, and Rice and Stearns counties in Minnesota.

I first learned of NRCS (then the SCS) growing up on a farm in Dodge County, Minnesota. My career started in 1988 while I was a student at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. I was hired as a Soil Conservationist Trainee.

Like many of us who chose a career in conservation, I enjoy most any outdoor activity, especially trips to the Boundary Waters.

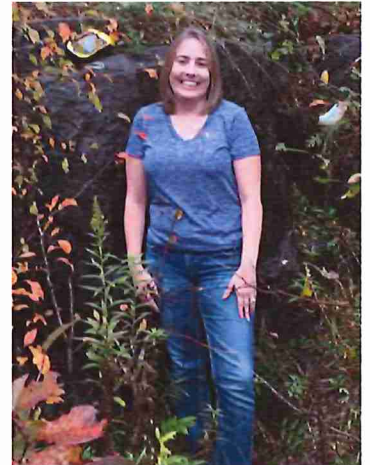
My advice to others is to try not to get caught up in the frustrations that come with any job – focus on why we are



here, who we work for (the producers), and what the purpose of the agency is. With NRCS, we are given an opportunity to make improvements on the landscape and to a producer's operation.

Kristy Baross, GIS Specialist

My name is Kristy Baross. I am a Regional NRCS GIS Specialist located in Duluth, Minnesota. I grew up in Big Snow Country, Bessemer Michigan. I have always enjoyed what the Northwoods has to offer families. I graduated from Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan in 1999 with a degree in Environmental Conservation with an emphasis in GIS. Before graduation, I spent the summer of 1998 as a Public Use Intern for Seney National Wildlife Refuge, an experience where I was able to take part in eagle, osprey, and loon bandings as well as many interpretive programs. My first GIS position was as a GIS/GPS technician with the Camp Grayling Environmental Office on the military training site in Grayling, Michigan.



I first heard about NRCS from my college advisor who told me about a Cartographic Technician position that was part of the NRI staff in East Lansing, Michigan. I enjoyed working in East Lansing for NRCS. I then spent 4 years as the GIS Technician for the City of Manitowoc, Wisconsin. I loved the area and the position but always wanted to strive to be a GIS Specialist. I wanted to get back to working with conserving our natural resources, and GIS is a very important tool that is needed to do that in NRCS. As a Regional GIS Specialist, it is rewarding to help individuals with their GIS needs and to see the excitement when they learn a new skill in GIS.

My GIS career advice would be to network and learn from others in the field because it is ever-changing. Take advantage of training opportunities.

I am married to my high school sweetheart, Virgil, and we recently adopted 5-year old Michael Allen Baross and our Yorkie puppy, Jingles, into our family.

Upcoming Training

A series of statewide Cover Crop trainings is tentatively scheduled for the week of June 18. Training facilities have not yet been confirmed, so there is a possibility dates could change. Training topics include an overview of the Cover Crop practice standard and the soon-to-be-released Technical Note on Cover Crops.

Tentative dates and locations:

- June 18 – Marshall
- June 19 – Fergus Falls
- June 20 – Erskine
- June 21 – Mora
- June 22 – Rochester

Science and Technology Conservation Webinars

Visit the USDA NRCS Science and Technology Training website at <http://www.conservationwebinars.net/> to view or subscribe to upcoming webinars.

- May 8, 2018: Using Adaptive Nutrient Management to Answer "How Much Fertilizer Do You Really Need?"
- May 22, 2018: Bumble Bee Ecology and Conservation
- May 23, 2018: Air Quality Success Stories
- June 5, 2018: An Assessment of Organic Farming on Soil Physical and Chemical Properties

