



NEWS RELEASE

December 10, 2008

MASWCD Annual Convention Wrap-Up

St. Paul, MN - Soil and Water Conservation District board members and staff from across the state learned about wetland issues, water quality trading, working to restore impaired waters, and more at the 72nd annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD).

The meeting was held Dec. 7-9 at the Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel in St. Paul. This year's theme was "SWCDs – Meeting the Challenge."

"This was a great chance for us to learn more about some of the current natural resource issues in the state," said outgoing MASWCD President Ken Pederson. Pederson added, "The convention always provides us with new ideas that we can use locally."

Dr. Peter Nowak was keynote speaker on December 8. Nowak is a professor at the UW-Madison's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. His expertise related to the human dimension of natural resource management is sought after by organizations across the nation. Nowak provided his insights into how SWCDs can be the key to making the water resources of Minnesota sustainable.

Later that morning, a session was held entitled "Working Across SWCD Boundaries to Achieve Water Quality Improvements." The session focused on the future of water management issues facing the state of Minnesota and provided information and recommendations for ways SWCDs might more effectively work across district boundaries. Speakers included Gaylen Reetz, Regional Division Director of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; John Jaschke, Executive Director of the Board of Water and Soil Resources; State Representative Rick Hansen, House Watersheds, Wetlands and Buffers Subcommittee; Don Bajumpaa, Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District Manager; and Dr. Peter Nowak.

In addition to a variety of sessions on conservation topics, the annual meeting included the MASWCD business meeting, with discussions and votes on natural resource resolutions.

Several awards were presented at a December 8 luncheon. These include the Minnesota DNR Division of Waters Appreciation Award, MASWCD/MPCA Outstanding Community Conservationist Award, MASWCD/MnDOT Living Snow Fence Achievement Award, the Outstanding SWCD employee award, and awards for legislator, media, teacher, environmental education, and SWCD supervisor. Visit the "[Award Programs](#)" page for more information.

The convention also featured a December 9 luncheon, sponsored by MASWCD with support from *The Farmer* magazine. Outstanding conservationists from SWCDs across the state were honored for their achievements.

Additional information on the event is available on the "[Annual Convention](#)" page of this web site.

Featured sponsors of this year's event were the Minnesota Corn Growers Association and the Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council.

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