

BEV NORDBY NAMED 2003 OUTSTANDING SWCD EMPLOYEE

BLOOMINGTON—Bev Nordby, administrator for the Mower Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), was named the 2003 Outstanding District Employee Dec. 1 at the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) annual meeting held in Bloomington. The award is sponsored by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Nordby was recognized for her leadership both in and out of her work area. When presenting the award, Ron Harnack, executive director of the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, said that Nordby is known in her home district as progressive and proactive; her passion for conservation has extended beyond the boundaries of her home county.

Nordby was instrumental in organizing a group of natural resource managers across the Lower Mississippi. Soon, she became the first chair of this group, known as the Basin Alliance for the Lower Mississippi River in Minnesota (BALMM). Under her leadership, BALMM took flight and spread to include more and more local, state, and federal partners in an intensive planning process. In fall 2002, she agreed to fill an unexpected vacancy in the BALMM leadership and acted as chair for several months. She also was central in crafting BALMM's Landscape Buffer Initiative.

Toward the end of 2001, she seized the opportunity to launch a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program initiative for Southeastern Minnesota—a project that was only a dream two years earlier when BALMM began. Nordby was key in garnering support for a CREP and coordinated discussions to complete the SE CREP application with details on practices, acreage, and other essential elements. This year, she continued to lead the charge for the SE CREP group and has done important work with her outreach efforts to build a strong coalition in support of the Governor's CREP proposal.

In support materials for the nomination, a peer wrote this about Nordby: "Her vision has allowed her conservation efforts to step outside the traditional boundaries of conservation district work and placed Mower SWCD at the forefront of conservation activity."

MASWCD's 67th annual meeting was held Nov. 30-Dec. 2 in Bloomington, Minn. Members of the state's SWCDs (including district staff and supervisors), along with conservation groups, state agencies, and other officials attended the meeting.

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