

## NEWS RELEASE



**For immediate release**

### **KETTLE RIVER GROUP RECEIVES COMMUNITY CONSERVATIONIST AWARD**

**St. Paul, Minn.**—The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) have awarded the Kettle River Advocates Group with the 2007 Community Conservationist Award. The Pine Soil and Water Conservation District nominated the group for the award.

The award was presented at the 71<sup>st</sup> annual MASWCD convention, held Dec.2-4 at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, Minnesota. The award provides Soil and Water Conservation Districts with the opportunity to nominate an individual, business, company, municipality, or organization for concern, cooperation, and/or implementation of conservation practices in a community environment.

In materials provided in support of the nomination, Pine SWCD noted that the Kettle River Advocates Group has provided leadership in the area of erosion sediment control, stormwater management, and land-use conservation planning.

The Kettle River Advocates Group (KRAG) is working closely with Pine SWCD to address one of the area's treasured resources – the Kettle River – a water resource designated by the Department of Natural Resources as a Wild and Scenic River. The primary source of the river's water quality and wildlife habitat degradation has been at the inlet of the Grindstone River. Here, Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs) and pick-up trucks have caused significant erosion of the riverbanks, which, in turn, has caused massive sediment plumes in the river. In response to this, the KRAG, in cooperation with the Pine SWCD and Barry Township, sought out strategies and practices to stop access to this portion of the river by OHVs and trucks, and to re-vegetate the riverbanks to prevent stormwater events from further releasing sediment into the river.

Pine SWCD Manager Mary Kay Anderson commented on the success of the group by stating, "Concerned citizens got together, wanted to know what they could do to correct the problem, convinced the township to do something about it, and it got done. The KRAG consists of very dedicated citizens, who want to make a difference in the water quality, and the future of the Kettle River."

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