



NEWS RELEASE
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For immediate release

STATE REPRESENTATIVE RICK HANSEN NAMED MASWCD'S 2008 LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA – State Representative Rick Hansen (DFL-S.St. Paul) has been named “Legislator of the Year” by the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD).

The award was presented to Rep. Hansen on Monday, Dec. 8, at MASWCD's 72nd annual meeting, which was held Dec. 7-9 at the Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel in St. Paul. Hansen also served as a panelist at the conference, provide an overview of the future of the Clean Water Legacy Act and SWCD program funding for the 2009 legislative session.

Rep. Hansen, a former SWCD supervisor and MASWCD Board Member, is beginning his third term as a state legislator. Hansen's experience as a supervisor enabled him to hit the ground running when elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives in 2004. He has helped to develop and influence many of the major environment and conservation measures passed by the Legislature in the last two years, including:

- Passage of the Legacy Constitutional Amendment and creation of the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council;
- Protection efforts from Invasive Species;
- Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve/Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) bonding dollars totaling \$25 million;
- Targeted disaster assistance to Southeastern Minnesota SWCDs' conservation efforts; and
- Ditch buffer legislation and leadership on drainage issues.

A longtime leader and supporter of conservation and natural resource issues, Hansen has served as Chair of the Wetlands, Watersheds, Buffers Subcommittee, Vice-Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, and Member of the Capital Investment Division, the Environment Finance Division, the Ag Finance Division, and the Game, Fish and Forestry Division.

Hansen also currently serves as Chair of the State Legislative Audit Commission, and was recently appointed to represent the House of Representatives on the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council. On the Council, Hansen will play a key role in making recommendations from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

In her comments during the award presentation, MASWCD Legislative Affairs Specialist Judy Erickson noted that “There is no one in the Legislature who is a stronger supporter of the work and role SWCDs play in delivering conservation to private landowners. Rep. Rick Hansen understands this unique delivery system and has a vision for strengthening Minnesota's Soil and Water Conservation Districts.”

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