PEZUTA ZIZI CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING AND RESOURCE CENTER RECEIVES 2012 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARD FROM MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) has named the Pezuta Zizi Cultural and Environmental Learning and Resource Center as their 2012 Environmental Education Award winner. The award was announced at the 76th MASWCD Annual Meeting, held Dec. 2-4 at the Doubletree by Hilton Bloomington - Minneapolis South. The Learning Center was nominated for the award by the Yellow Medicine SWCD.

The award honors an individual or organization for creating innovative conservation education activities, reaching students and a variety of other audiences. The award focuses on those who are not professional educators.

The Pezuta Zizi Cultural and Environmental Learning and Resource Center exists to assist people of all ages in developing a connection the Earth, so they make the best possible decisions affecting the environment. The Center uses the Upper Sioux Agency State Park as its “home base” and has a small board of directors who volunteer for programming and attend monthly meetings. While they do not actively seek memberships, the Center has a mailing list of school contacts and other interested citizens of 150 addresses.

The Center’s programs mainly focus on prairie ecosystems, water quality, and wetlands. A highlight of their program has been their Minnesota River Ecosystem Study. Since 1998 they have been sponsoring classroom presentations in Granite Falls relating to water quality in the Minnesota River Watershed. The Center also takes sixth graders on field trips in the fall and spring to the Minnesota River and Hazel Creek to study water quality through specific tests and by looking at the diversity in macro invertebrates founds there. They consistently promote this program as they believe that the students are our future land managers. The Center also has prairie learning trunks packed with games, curriculum and other learning materials that they loan out to schools free of charge, along with many other learning resources.

MASWCD extends our thanks and congratulations to the Pezuta Zizi Cultural and Environmental Learning and Resource Center!