NEWS RELEASE - For immediate release
November 6, 2015 corrected from October 30, 2015 version
Contact: Sheila Vanney, MASWCD Assistant Director, 651-690-9028

EIGHT NAMED AS FINALISTS FOR STATE’S 2015 OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONIST AWARD

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) has named the finalists for the state’s 2015 Outstanding Conservationist Award.

The winner will be announced at the 79th annual MASWCD Annual Meeting, set for Dec. 6-8 at the Doubletree by Hilton Bloomington - Minneapolis South in Bloomington, Minn. The award program recognizes farm families, individuals, conservation organizations, and other groups for their accomplishments in implementing conservation practices and improving Minnesota’s natural resources.

The program is sponsored by MASWCD, with support from The Farmer magazine. Editors and news directors are encouraged to follow up with the Soil and Water Conservation District contacts listed for feature and interview opportunities. The information was gathered from the nomination forms submitted to MASWCD by individual conservation districts. The finalists are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASWCD Area</th>
<th>Finalist</th>
<th>Nominating SWCD</th>
<th>SWCD Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Area 1</td>
<td>Kris and Bethany Folland Halma MN</td>
<td>Kittson SWCD</td>
<td>Justin Muller (218) 843-2619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Central Area 2</td>
<td>Dorrich Dairy Glenwood MN</td>
<td>Pope SWCD</td>
<td>Holly Kolarik (320) 634-5327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Area 3</td>
<td>Calvin and CeCe Harth Hinckley MN</td>
<td>Pine SWCD</td>
<td>Jill Carlier (320) 216-4241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Area 4</td>
<td>Jim and Chris Schwingler Jordan MN</td>
<td>Scott SWCD</td>
<td>Troy Kuphal (952) 492-5411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Area 5</td>
<td>Mike and George Landyut Walnut Grove MN</td>
<td>Redwood SWCD</td>
<td>Marilyn Bernhardson (507) 637-2427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central Area 6</td>
<td>Mike Roll, Crystal Waters Project Lake Crystal MN</td>
<td>Blue Earth SWCD</td>
<td>Jerad Bach (507) 345-4744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Area 7</td>
<td>Goldsmith Brothers (Ross and Steven) Chatfield MN</td>
<td>Fillmore SWCD</td>
<td>Donna Rasmussen (507) 765-3878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central Area 8</td>
<td>Dale and Andrew Schock Staples MN</td>
<td>Wadena SWCD</td>
<td>Darren Newville (218) 631-3195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-More-
Background on Kris and Bethany Folland:

Kris & Bethany Folland and their children operate a farm and ranch raising small grain, corn and soybeans. The Follands also have cattle they rotationally graze through assistance from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Over the years, the Follands have put many of their acres into the EQIP No-Till and Cover Crop practices. Voluntary conservation efforts include reduced tillage, leaving crop stubble in the fall to prevent erosion and benefit wildlife, maintaining acres for pollinator habitat, setting aside acres for wildlife cover, and maintaining tree rows Kris’s dad planted when he was a kid.

Kris and Bethany have extensive involvement with farming and grazing organizations. Kris serves on the Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council, Farm Service Agency Kittson County Committee, Kittson County Extension Committee, and Lake Bronson Farmers Union board of directors. Bethany is on the Hallock figure skating board, and together Kris and Bethany are 4-H club leaders and Farm Rescue Volunteers. The Follands are strong conservationists that work hard in maintaining their soil and water quality.

Background on Dorrich Dairy:

Dorrich Dairy is run by the Vold Family of Glenwood: Richard & Dorothy, Brad and Suzanne, and Greg and Charity and family. The primary crops grown are corn and alfalfa with some acres of winter rye double cropped with soybeans. They are milking 400 Holstein cows in freestyle barn with a double eight herringbone parlor.

The Volds have completed a shelterbelt, wetland restoration, native grass planting, no-till, cover crops, and integrated pest management (IPM) practices on the cropland and in their barns. They are working on being the first Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certified Farm in Pope County.

The Volds are good stewards and leaders in the community and are using conservation methods in all aspects of their operation and enjoy sharing their knowledge at the local, state, and national levels.

- More -
Background on Calvin and Cecilla Harth:

Calvin and CeCe Harth own approximately 640 acres east of Hinckley. They are extremely environmentally conscious people who are actively working with MN DNR Fish and Wildlife to improve and establish a very large sharp tailed grouse and woodcock LEK in the area. Cal says “Curiosity is the cure to boredom”.

Cal Harth is a model landowner that inspires his friends and neighbors with conservation-minded ways. The Harth’s have continued interest and passion for creating and maintaining wildlife habitat, and are ambassadors for open landscapes in Pine County.

Background on Jim and Chris Schwingler:

Conservation is not a Band-Aid, but a cure for our land and a way of life, say the Schwinglers from the Scott district. And with this past year’s flooding, Jim and Chris stand by this belief as all of their projects – water and sediment control basins, grade stabilization structures, grassed waterways, diversions and rock inlets – have NOT failed!

The Schwinglers own and operate 52 acres in St. Lawrence Township, in close proximity to a DNR-protected ditch and the Minnesota River. They are visible, active and passionate advocates for cover crops and buffers along our beautiful Scott County waters and beyond.

-More-
Background on Mike and George Landuyt:

Mike Landuyt and his father, George, are producers out of Walnut Grove, MN. Mike is now the fourth generation of Landuyts to own and manage the farm since it was acquired in 1928. Along with a beef finishing operation for 700 head, they grow corn, soybeans, and hay on the nearly 2,000 acres they own and rent.

From water and sediment control basins and grade stabilization structures, to buffer strips and cover crops, the Landuyts have been active stewards of the land. They incorporated new technologies before programs were available to assist. Conservation programs have allowed them to further enhance their conservation practices.

Mike and George believe you must leave the land better than you found it. They aspire to leave this evidence of good stewardship to a fifth generation of Landuyts.

Background on Mike Roll and the Crystal Waters Project:

Crystal Waters Project, a nonprofit organization, has been actively working in the Crystal Lake Watershed, an SWCD priority area. To date, they have worked on many water quality projects. A few that stand out include a 200’ erosion control project in Robinson Park, the launching of two floating islands on the lake to remove nutrients, and creation of an “adopt a storm drain” program which has adopted over 150 storm drains.

The Crystal Waters Project has also successfully removed over 97,000 pounds of Carp/Bullheads from the lake this year, and is coordinating a 75 acre wetland restoration. They have created annual fundraising events such as a “plant the park” concert and an ice fishing contest. So far they have invested over $30,000 of fundraised money back into the watershed.

-More-
Background on Ross and Steven Goldsmith:

The Goldsmith Brothers, Ross and Steven, of Chatfield are shown here with some of their family and a few curious cattle. The Goldsmiths farm 2200 acres, of which 1100 are in pasture and another 300 are in hay. Row crops are planted on the contour, and terraces and grassed waterways are well maintained.

Their livestock and manure management is finely tuned for efficient use of their monoslope building, built with assistance from the SWCD. They are involved in 4-H, township zoning, local producer groups, mission trips, and share their time with visitors to show their monoslope building, with U of M veterinary students to gain field experience, and with local school children to see baby farm animals.

The Goldsmiths lead by example in their farming operation and community.

Background on Dale and Andrew Schock:

Dale and his son Andrew Schock operate a 4,000 acre grain farm raising corn, soybeans, edible beans, and wheat. The Schocks are heavily involved in using nutrient and irrigation management techniques on their 49 pivots along with utilizing the Adaptive Nitrogen Management Program.

They have also done numerous wildlife practices such as planting pollinator habitat and food plots. The Schocks don’t do these practices for the recognition but to be good stewards of the land.

Dale and Andrew are great representatives for the Wadena County area and have the ability to be leaders for other local farmers.

###