MASWCD Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capitol: Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2019 MASWCD Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capitol earlier this week. The annual legislative event brought nearly 150 representatives and locally elected officials from SWCDs across the state to Saint Paul for discussions with our lawmakers about soil and water conservation priorities.

Your help telling our story about landowners across Minnesota implementing conservation practices is critical to this successful event each year – thank you!

To view more photos, click here.

Lake of the Woods SWCD tackles winter recreation aftermath with “Keep It Clean” campaign

Winter recreation in Minnesota’s lake country is changing with the popularity of ice fishing and modern wheeled fish houses that resemble campers. This mode of ice fishing – where anglers sleep, eat and fish in wheeled houses parked on the ice – creates challenges for managing water quality. On Lake of the Woods, local officials began noticing large amounts of trash on the ice at the end of the season.

Local stakeholders including the Lake of the Woods Tourism Bureau, the Department of Natural Resources, the Lake of the Woods Soil and Water Conservation District, Lake of the Woods County, and the Friends of Zippel Bay State Park formed a committee to combat the increase in waste and encourage proper disposal. For the past six years, the group has successfully implemented several solutions from providing trash collection on
Get to know the MASWCD Board: Chuck Rau

Starting this month, we’re launching a new feature to introduce members of MASWCD’s board of directors. The directors and officers on the statewide board work together to develop common goals and a shared voice for the soil and water conservation districts of Minnesota. This month meet West Central Area 2 Director Chuck Rau, who is also a Benton County SWCD supervisor. Chuck joined the board in December 2018.

Click here to read a Q&A with Chuck.

Stearns County’s Brad Wenz honored for conservation excellence

Stearns County SWCD Conservationist Brad Wenz received the 2019 Hugh Hammond Bennett Award for Conservation Excellence at the 2019 National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting. This award is named in honor of Hugh Hammond Bennett, the founder of the Soil Conservation Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture often revered as the “Father of Soil Conservation.”

In Stearns County, Brad is known as the “Godfather of Soil Conservation.” He has spent 38 years helping area farmers with conservation planning. This tremendous honor, sponsored by National Conservation Planning Partnership, is awarded to one employee nationwide each year for conservation planning excellence.

Brad was recognized at the 2019 Annual Meeting Appreciation Banquet along with other national award winners. Click here to learn more about NACD awards.

Video spotlight: Using cover crops in Mower County

Cover crops are a win-win for the soil and farmers in Mower County. The Mower Soil and Water Conservation District has helped many area landowners install cover crops to suppress weeds and increase water filtration. Understanding and improving the soil leads to higher productivity for farmers.
Click here to watch a short video about this project in Mower County.

This project was also featured in MAWCD's new educational video about the work of SWCDs across Minnesota. (To watch the full video, click here.)

SWCDs in the news

Soil and water conservation districts from around the state are making headlines!

Check out these recent stories:

- Landowners share conservation success stories (Crow Wing SWCD) | Brainerd Dispatch
- St. Louis County set to dole out funds to fight aquatic invaders (North St. Louis SWCD) | Duluth News Tribune
- Farmers Fair to be held March 7 (Stevens County SWCD) | Agri News
- Liz Dengate and Jayne Hager Dee discuss Clean Water programs (Dakota SWCD) | KYMN Radio
- Cover crops, reduced tillage topic of winter workshop in Renville (Renville SWCD) | West Central Tribune
- Samuelson column: Carlton SWCD working on positive changes | Pine Journal

If you know someone who might be interested in receiving our updates, share this sign up link.