News from the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The voice of Minnesota’s SWCDs

MASWCD at the Capitol

Last month’s Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capitol brought more than 140 SWCD representatives from across the state to Saint Paul!

Thanks to everyone who attended and shared the importance of our work with lawmakers. Your presence and conversations with officials made this event a success!

Click here to view more photos from the event.

MASWCD legislative update

The legislative session is now two-thirds complete and while leaders are praising the progress of the session up to this point, many difficult and politically polarizing issues still remain unresolved and will dominate the remaining five weeks of the 2018 session. These issues include: federal tax conformity, school safety, guns, sexual harassment, elder abuse, and the bonding bill.

While we have yet to see any full bonding bill proposal from the legislative bodies, the Governor released a $1.5 billion bonding proposal last month with a focus on higher education and infrastructure rehabilitation. His proposal did include $30 million for Minnesota’s water quality focused Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). CREP easement dollars are appropriated to BWSR for SWCDs to enroll interested landowners in permanent conservation easements. Expect the House and Senate to continue hearing projects in the next few weeks, with House and Senate proposals of about $800 million coming together at the end of April.

Click here to read more on how SWCDs might be impacted legislatively this session.

Minnesota SWCDs unite with conservation leaders in D.C.

On National Ag Day last month, Minnesota SWCD board and staff members joined NACD
From left to right: Dennis Fuchs, Stearns County SWCD; Curtis Elke, acting Minnesota state conservationist for NRCS; Rep. Collin Peterson, ranking member of the US House Agriculture Committee; Ian Cunningham, former MASWCD president; and Doug Thomas, MN Board of Water and Soil Resources.

A big month for conservation

Mark your calendars! April is filled with wonderful opportunities to spread awareness of the importance of conservation and SWCDs. Upcoming events include:

- Earth Day on Sunday, April 22.
- Arbor Day on Friday, April 27.
- NACD Stewardship Week on April 29-May 6. [Click here](#) to learn how to get involved.

Filing period approaching for SWCD elections

Elections for local SWCDs are coming up. The filing period for those interested in running for office is May 22-June 5. [Click here for more information](#).

SWCDs in the news

Soil and water conservation districts from around the state are making headlines! Check out these recent stories:

- [Goodhue County trout habitat helpers: Arresting upland erosion](#) | Outdoor News
- [Ladies Night to celebrate ‘Superheroes of Conservation’](#) | Wahpeton Daily News
- [Invasive species work ramps up in Aitkin County](#) | Aitkin Age
- [Soil health cafe chat features area experts](#) | Marshall Independent
- [Learn about soil health from one of the best](#) | Faribault Daily News
- [Engineering assistance available to landowners in Meeker County Soil and Water Conservation District](#) | Litchfield Independent Review
- [Column: Land cover and pollinators? There’s a map for that](#) | Stillwater Gazette
- **Certifiably the best: Farmers adopt conservation practices** | Fergus Falls Daily Journal

- **Knutson attends SWCD leadership conference in D.C.** | Marshall Independent

*If you know someone who might be interested in receiving our updates, share this [sign up link](#).*