News from the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The voice of Minnesota’s SWCDs

“Ladies Night Out” event celebrates conservation

For the past 22 years, the Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District has found success by combining conservation education with community-building and fun at their annual Ladies Night Out event. Teaming up with the Richland Soil Conservation District in North Dakota, this annual event brings in hundreds of women each year to learn about smart conservation practices they can use on their family farms or backyard gardens.

According to District Clerk Diane Lommel, this event has been such a hit because it helps educate women about SWCD programs and services while also being a fun night out. Conservation presentations are paired with a delicious meal and fun activities. Each year there is a new theme and costume contest. Past event themes have included western wear and groovy 1960s attire.

This year the theme was “Superheroes of Conservation.” Attendees transformed into their favorite superheroes and learned how they can “save the soil”. They also enjoyed stand-up comedy and a game of “Minute to Win it.”

Many women look forward to the event every spring, with approximately 300 people attending each year. A portion of the proceeds from the event go to a local charity.

Click here to learn more about the event.

MASWCD legislative update

Less than two weeks remain in the 2018 legislative session before the deadline for adjournment on May 21. Legislators in both bodies have passed all portions of their omnibus supplemental spending bills. In addition, the House released its bonding bill package last week, which currently includes $10 million for RIM Reserve easements to be leveraged for CREP, and both the House and Senate have bills establishing a riparian buffer property tax credit. Click here to learn more about how conservation is being represented at the Minnesota State Capitol.
Register now: MASWCD Washington, D.C. Leadership Institute
July 8-12, 2018

Registration is now open for this summer's MASWCD Washington, D.C. Leadership Institute: A session to strengthen SWCD leadership capacity.

At this five-day institute in Washington, D.C., participants will:
- Enhance their personal leadership skills
- Learn more about the policy formation and implementation process
- Hear from non-government organizations on how they work with members and partners to develop conservation, wildlife and agricultural policy
- Analyze the leadership styles, structures, relationships, goals, and motivations of leaders in Washington, D.C.

This program is sponsored by MASWCD, the University of Minnesota Extension, and Natural Resources Conservation Services.

Learn more and register today. Registrations are due by June 4.

Filing period for SWCD elections almost here

Reminder that local SWCD elections are approaching! If you are interested in running for office, the filing period is May 22-June 5. Click here for more information.

Nancy Benson has served on the Wadena SWCD Board of Supervisors for the past 10 years, and says that it's one of the best investments of her time. “We can’t make more land, so we have to take care of what we have,” said Benson. “Serving your soil and water conservation district is such a worthwhile task – you gain something, you give back to your community, and you’re working with wonderful people who all care about conservation. If you’re considering running but are unsure, know that there are wonderful leadership workshops and trainings that will help you become a board member who is a true asset to your community.”

SWCDs in the news

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

- Mower County joins Walk-In Access hunting program | Post Bulletin
- Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District meets in Saint Paul | Owatonna People's Press
- Rice SWCD officials meet with local legislators | Faribault Daily News
- North Fork Crow River clean-up stabilizes gullies, retains topsoil | Monticello Times
- Leadership on AIS: Vermilion Lake Association and North St. Louis SWCD are making a difference | Ely Timberjay
If you know someone who might be interested in receiving our updates, share this sign up link.