Save the date: MASWCD Annual Convention Dec. 8-10, 2019

Now that we’ve reached the mid-year point, we are looking forward to the 2019 MASWCD Annual Convention & Trade Show this December. At this annual event, MASWCD provides updates on current issues, offers informational sessions, and recognizes outstanding districts and individuals. We hope you’ll join us this December in Bloomington.

MASWCD Annual Convention & Trade Show
Dec. 8-10, 2019
DoubleTree Hotel
Bloomington, Minnesota

West Central SWCD Technical Service Area expands through shared staffing model

Each of the eight MASWCD regions has a designated Technical Service Area (TSA) to provide shared engineering expertise critical to implementing practices across the state. The West Central TSA utilizes a unique governance model and shared staffing to create efficiencies that have allowed the TSA to gain technical expertise in the Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program and nutrient management planning.
For starters, the TSA doesn’t have any employees because the positions are hosted in a handful of member districts: three in the Stearns County SWCD, one in the Stevens SWCD and one in the Todd County SWCD. The newest position hosted in the Todd County SWCD will aid with comprehensive nutrient management plans – a need identified by the TSA through an assessment of its member districts. Read more.

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**Cunningham: Conservation districts are doing their part to address soil health**

National Association of Conservation Districts Secretary-Treasurer Ian Cunningham (MASWCD Past President, Pipestone SWCD) testified in June before the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry about the importance of soil health practices and locally-led conservation efforts.

Cunningham owns and operates a fifth-generation family farm with his son in southwest Minnesota, producing corn, soybeans and beef cattle.

“Soil health is a top priority across our 800-acre operation,” Cunningham said in written testimony to the subcommittee. “We have come to realize that healthy soil is the key to addressing many natural resource concerns. It is clear that healthy soil is the bedrock and should be the priority of our conservation efforts.”

Cunningham also emphasized the important role of conservation districts in leading producers to implement soil health conservation practices. Read more of his testimony here.

*On behalf of MASWCD and its members, we’d like to thank Ian for his leadership on soil health and his advocacy on behalf of locally-led conservation.*

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**Get to know the MASWCD Board: Mark Schnobrich**

This month, we’re highlighting Area 6 Director Mark Schnobrich, a longtime forester who’s served as a McLeod Soil and Water Conservation District supervisor since 2011.

Learn more about Mark, who lives on Belle Lake and cares for hazelnut trees, in this Q&A.

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**SWCDs in action: Photos from districts across the state**

Earlier this summer, we asked SWCD staff to submit photos to give us all a peek of the exciting projects your districts are working on. Check out the photos below and our Facebook album to see more.

- South Central Technical Service
- Mower SWCD outreach
- Rice SWCD’s new cover crop
Interested in being featured in a future MASWCD newsletter? Send your photos and a short caption to cali@goffpublic.com.

SWCDs in the news

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

- **Soil and Conservation District turns 75** (Wilkin SWCD) | Wahpeton Daily News
- **AmeriCorps crews improve trout streams, gain work experience via Root River SWCD** | Winona Daily News
- **Crow Wing SWCD to host 7th annual photo contest** | Brainerd Dispatch
- **Rice SWCD hires new resource specialist** | Faribault Daily News
- **Matt Dixon Farm achieves water quality certification** (Cass SWCD) | Brainerd Dispatch
- **Lida Farm recognized as an Agriculture Water Quality Certified Farm** (West Otter Tail SWCD) | Fergus Falls Daily Journal
- **Minnesota upping its efforts against invasives** (Martin SWCD) | Fairmont Sentinel
- **SWCD helping producers unearth soil secrets** (Pipestone SWCD) | Pipestone Star

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