



MASWCD Accomplishments 2006

POLICY FORUM - The MASWCD provides a forum for SWCDs to present policy initiatives for the membership. The Association's resolution process offers SWCD supervisors and staff the opportunity to discuss conservation policy at the local, Area and state level. In 2006, thirty resolutions were submitted and voted on by the membership to address SWCD funding, governance and conservation program enhancements. This process not only sets grass-roots policy for the organization, it also serves as an educational and communication tool for the membership to share issues and ideas with their peers.

IMPAIRED WATERS - The MASWCD worked diligently in 2006 to continue to expand opportunities for SWCDs in the impaired waters initiative. With adequate funding from the State Legislature, the initiative has the potential for additional program and technical assistance dollars for districts. MASWCD is one of 18 organizations from the business, government and nonprofit communities that were selected to participate in the Stakeholder Process that began in 2003.

NURTURE A POLITICAL NETWORK - The MASWCD spent significant time during the 2006 legislative session lobbying key legislators for SWCD conservation policy and funding. Through the efforts of the Association's legislative committee, MASWCD legislative affairs specialist, Judy Erickson, and the MASWCD Board of Directors and staff, MASWCD continues to help districts inform their legislators about the important and growing role of SWCDs. Several MASWCD Area Directors provided an opportunity for SWCDs to meet legislators during Area meetings.

TRAINING/INFORMATION AND EDUCATION - During 2006, MASWCD provided training to SWCD staff and board members to learn about new issues, exchange ideas, and invest in the future. Legislative Briefing & Day at the Capitol provided information and discussion on funding and policy issues, and a coordinated way for SWCDs to meet with legislators. Supervisor Refresher Course was a forum for elected board members to take advantage of continuing education opportunities. The annual convention provided information on emerging issues, recognition of individual conservation efforts, and the opportunity for SWCD supervisors to cast their vote on business items. MASWCD was successful in receiving a grant for the MASWCD Leadership Institute which helped defray the costs for 31 local staff and supervisors to participate.

ENHANCED COMMUNICATIONS WITH DISTRICTS & PARTNERS – In 2006, the MASWCD web site continued to provide SWCDs and partners with timely and relevant information. Along with the MASWCD newsletter "Tidbits," the monthly e-mail newsletter "Bits of Tidbits," legislative updates, and regular mailings, the Association is keeping supervisors and staff throughout the state informed of SWCD activities.