Murray SWCD Annual Report 2009

Murray Soil and Water Conservation District
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Slayton, MN 56172
507-836-6990

District Staff

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District Secretary

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NRCS Staff

Brian Christiansen-
District Conservationist

Allisa Wendland-
Soil Conservation Technician

SWPJPO Staff

Mike Skoglund-Southwest
Prairie Technical Service Area
Civil Engineering Technician

Farm Bill Assistant

Dennis Opdahl-part time Farm
Bill Assistance Technician

Mission & History of the Murray Soil and Water Conservation District

Mission:

The mission of the Murray Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is to provide high quality, professional assistance to the citizens and land managers of our county to protect and enhance our Natural Resources.

History:

The Murray SWCD was established in 1954 to address the Natural Resource Protection needs of land users in the area and encourage the preservation and conservation of the resources.
Today, the SWCD assists not only rural but urban landowners with various programs and information needed to protect the soil, water and air quality. The importance of these goals and the accomplishment will be easily measured in the future through a sound and healthy economy and resources both human and wildlife.
SWCD's are political subdivisions of the State established under Minnesota Statue 103C. Each SWCD is governed by a board of elected supervisors.
The SWCD Board and Staff are unique in that they live & work in the county and watersheds. The work and decisions that are made affect themselves, their families, their neighbors and friends. With these ties, the decisions made are for the good of the local resources, economy and future generations.
In making sound guidelines for our programs, we are protecting the county, watersheds, and ultimately our state and nation.
The SWCD's partner with other resource agencies to ensure that programs and funds are best utilized and actions are coordinated to best suit the needs of the area.

Murray SWCD Board Meetings are held every 2nd Thursday of the Month at 1:30 p.m.

2009 Board Meetings

January 8
February 12
March 12
April 9
May14
June 11
July 9
August 13
September 10
October 8
November 12
December 10

Supervisors

Paul Posthuma-District I (Ellsborough, Skandia, Cameron, and Lowville) **Vice Chairman**

1609 State Hwy 91

Lake Wilson, MN 56151

Phone:507-879-3102

Gary Brinks-District II (Lake Sarah, Mason, Slayton, and Iona) **Secretary**

1577 US Hwy 59

Slayton, MN 56172

Phone:507-763-3775

Shannon Cohrs-District III (Shetek, Holly, Murray, and Dovray) **P.R.&I.**

244 Hanes Ave.

Dovray, MN 56125

Phone:507-380-0997

Arland Moger-District IV (Lime Lake, Des Moines River, Bondin, and Belfast) **Treasurer**

504 260th Ave.

Fulda, MN 56131

Phone:507-274-5131

Roger Steinman-District V (Chanarambie, Leeds, Moulton, and Fenton) **Chairman**

710 Normal Ave.

Lake Wilson, MN 56151

507-879-3194

Left to Right

Front: Arland Moger, Roger Steinman

Back: Shannon Cohrs, Paul Posthuma, Gary Brinks

Murray SWCD Services

State Cost-Share

The State Cost Share Program was established in 1977 and is administered locally by the Murray Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The State Cost Share Program provides financial assistance to landowners for installing conservation practices that protect and improve water quality by controlling soil erosion and reducing sedimentation.

The program provides up to 60% of the total eligible costs of a practice

District Tree Program

Available to landowners in Murray County. Conservation grade trees can be purchased from the district. SWCD staff also maintain a planting program for those who are interested.

Farmstead shelterbelts, field windbreaks, living snow fences and other wildlife plantings can be designed and planted by SWCD staff.

Cost-share is available to those who sign up for the programs and meet maintenance requirements on the tree planning.

For more information on tree plantings please contact our office at 507-836-6990 ext.102

Tree matting currently available in Murray County

Murray SWCD has a tree mating machine that lays a continuous layer of six foot wide black fabric over your new trees rows. The fabric resists tearing, puncturing and weed penetration, while allowing air and water to get to the tree roots. When the fabric is used properly, it prevents weeds from growing around the trees reducing weed competition, so you may see better growth rates and tree survivability. Using the mat reduces the need for mowing, tilling and pulling weeds by hand.

Ground Water Level Monitoring Program:
The Murray SWCD measures the water level (monitor) in a total of 4 non-irrigation observation wells at an interval of once monthly.

Tillage Transect:
The Murray SWCD participates in the tillage transect survey (TTS) which are designed to gather information on tillage and crop residue management systems. The TTS is a versatile tool-helping measure tillage progress locally, on a watershed basis, and other the entire state. The TTS date allows us to provide solid data to state and national organizations.

Well Sealing

The Murray SWCD works with the Murray County Environmental Services Office and with the Watershed Districts of Murray County for cost-share funding for the sealing of unused wells.

Please Contact our office for more information on well sealing at 507-836-6990 ext.3

Precipitation Monitoring

The SWCD in conjunction with the State Climatology Office monitors site specific precipitation throughout Murray County. The data collected provides citizens and the State of Minnesota with important precipitation information and weather history.

Wetland Conservation Act Program

Murray SWCD Education

Environmental Fair:

The 6th Grade Environmental Fair has been held every fall for 17 years at the fairgrounds in southwestern Minnesota educating area youth about natural resources. In 2008 the Environmental Fair was held at the Murray County Fairgrounds in Slayton, Minnesota with 1,345 students attending the fair.

Poster Contest:

The 2009 theme was *"Out Soil-A Layer of Life".* Each year the 5th and 6th graders statewide have the chance to participate in the Poster and Mural Contest. Poster packets with all the rules and details are given to each 5th and 6th grade teacher in our county.

Annual Envirothon:

This event is held annually in the spring for all Area V (14 county area) students grades 9-12 at Camden State Park, near Lynd, MN. The envirothon is a competitive event, which provides students an opportunity to work together to solve environmental problems in an outdoor setting. Each four or five member team attends learning stations covering forestry, aquatics, soils, wildlife, and each year's chosen current issue. Natural Resources professionals are at each station using hands-on examples and the outdoors to test the teams' knowledge of each topic. Information about the competition is sent to each school in the 14 county area.

Stewardship Week:

Each year we contact all our county's churches and encourage them to join the nationwide observance of Soil and Water Stewardship Week and hand out stewardship materials. Our SWCD feels this is an important issue, so all expenses are paid by the Murray SWCD.

The Stewardship Week was April 26th- May 3rd, 2009. The theme was **"Dig It".** The basic theme encourages us to learn about life-sustaining natural resources and to remember that each of us has the power to conserve resources for future generations.

Newsletters:

A Newsletter was mailed countywide to Murray County landowners and operators. Newsletters include current available programs, special announcements, staff changes, and much more.

Murray County Fair Booth:

Check us out each year at the fair! We usually have drawings and information about soil and water conservation at our fair booth held at the Murray County Fair in Slayton, Minnesota in August.

Annual Ladies' Ag Workshops:

These fun and creative workshops are held annually in September. Ladies' Workshops are open to any one in Murray County that are landowners, land operators, or women in the county that have an interest in conservation.

The event was Thursday, September 9th, 2009 at the YMCA in Marshall, MN. The theme was "Rain, Rain, Flow This Way".

For more information contact us at 507-836-6990 Extension 3.

Year's Highlights January 1, 2009 - December 31, 2009

January- Murray SWCD started off the new calendar year with the development of the District's 2009 Annual Work Plan. A wetland restoration was staked and is ready for construction. The Board reviewed four well and boring sealing records.

February- Presentations were given to fifth and sixth grade students at Murray County Central, Chandler Christian, St. Paul's Lutheran and Fulda Elementary schools to promote the conservation poster contest. The theme of the 2009 poster contest was "Our Soil a Layer of Life". Supervisors and Staff attended the Southwest Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (SWMASWCD) Area V meeting on February 19, 2009. The Board approved 2 state cost-share applications for farmstead shelterbelts. Supervisors and Staff attended the Legislative Days in St. Paul on February 23 & 24, 2009. The Board approved sponsoring two kids to attend the Long Lake Conservation Camp.

March- The Murray SWCD furnished materials to the local churches for promoting Soil Stewardship week April 26-May 3, 2009. The theme for the 2009 Soil Stewardship week was "Dig It". The Board reviewed 17 well and boring records. The Board approved 7 state-cost share applications for farmstead shelterbelts and 1 Native Buffer application. A survey and design was completed for a wetland restoration.

April- The Poster contest for the 5th and 6th grade students was judged. 1st place poster was Murray County Central, 1st place mural was Fulda Public. Cooperators picked up trees they had ordered for their conservation tree practices on April 24, 2009. Three State Cost-Share applications were approved for Farmstead Shelterbelts. The Board approved an RC&D application for a community garden project. The Board approved in-kind contribution from the Murray SWCD to do site preparation tilling of the community garden plot. The Board reviewed 5 water well and boring and 8 well and boring sealing records.

May-The staff from Murray SWCD helped with the Envirothon at Camden State Park. The Board reviewed 18 water well and boring records and 7 well and boring sealing records. A cost-share application for 3 alternative rock intakes was approved and forwarded to RCRCA for cost-share funding. The Board approved a state cost-share application for terraces. A cost-share application for 2 alternative rock intakes was approved and forwarded to Heron Lake Watershed District for cost-share funding. The Board reviewed the proposed 2010 budget for the SWCD. There are 4 wildlife habitat incentive program applications. In May there were 3 waterways constructed, one terrace job completed, one wetland restoration completed and one terrace project staked.

June- The Board reviewed 2 well and boring records and 3 well and boring sealing records. Supervisors and Staff attended the South West Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (SWMASWCD) Area V meeting on June 19, 2009. The Murray SWCD received the *Excellent* award in 2009 from the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Capacity Award Program. One wetland restoration and one waterway were completed. The Board approved payment for 13 state cost-share contracts.

July- Arrangements were made for a fair booth at the Murray County Fair which will have a display on emerald ash bore in trees. The District will be the Fiscal Agent for the Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area.. The board reviewed 3 water well and boring records and 4 well and boring sealing records. A Dam construction is in progress with the fencing and watering system installed. The Board approved payment of one state cost-share contract for a farmstead shelterbelt.

August- Supervisors and staff worked in the fair booth at the Murray County Fair. The Murray SWCD set their 2010 state cost-share reimbursement rate at 50% not to exceed $2,500.00 per project. A DNR Permit for a new bridge between Bloody Lake and Lake Shetek was reviewed by the Board. The Board approved payment of 1 State Cost-Share contract for a Waterway. The Board signed the FY 2010 grant with the Board of Water and Soil Resources. The Board reviewed one well and boring record. A Dam restoration was completed. Supervisors and Staff attended the Southwest Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (SWMASWCD) Area V meeting on August 26, 2009.

September-. One water well record was reviewed by the board. The staff helped with the Environmental Fair for sixth grade students, which was held at the Lyon County Fair Grounds in Marshall, MN. A Women's Day was held at the YMCA in Marshall, MN. The Board reviewed Memorandums of Understandings that the district has with other organizations and agencies. The Murray SWCD will be doing the ground water level-monitoring program for DNR. A State Cost-Share application was approved for a waterway.

October- One well and boring sealing record was reviewed by the Board. The SWCD purchased a new Canon Copier. The Board approved payment of a cost-share application for 1 alternative rock intake. The Board reviewed the 2008 final financial report for the State Cost-Share program. Two waterways were staked. The Murray SWCD provided in-kind contribute for doing the fall tilling of the Community Garden plot. Completed construction on a 150 acre CREP Wetland Restoration project.

November- SWCD Employees attended the Board of Soil and Water Resources Academy on November 2-4, 2009 at Cragens. The SWCD's volunteer rain gauge monitors were recognized with a token of appreciation. Supervisors and Staff attended the South West Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (SWMASWCD) Area V meeting in Marshall, MN on November 19, 2009. The Board reviewed 6 water well and boring sealing records. Four waterways were staked and surveyed.

December- The Board reviewed 43water well and boring records. 2 Supervisors and 1 staff attended the Annual MASWCD Convention in Duluth, MN. on December 6-8, 2009. A newsletter was prepared and mailed out to 900 producers in the county. There is a new program called the Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve Clean Water Fund-Riparian Buffers Program. The SWCD will provide in-kind help to the Heron Lake Watershed District to promote rain gardens. A presentation was given to the Board on noxious weeds. There are 17 application approved for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

The Murray SWCD would like to say THANK YOU to the Murray County Commissioners, NRCS, FSA, DNR, Heron Lake Watershed District, and the County Environmental Service staff for the tremendous amount of support, commitment, and leadership demonstrated towards the grass roots level of conservation being achieved through the Murray SWCD.

2009 Accomplishments

State Cost-Share

- **17 Farmstead Shelterbelts**
- **1 Terrace**
- **1 Waterway**

EQIP-$194,604.79 obligated

16 Contracts

- **1- Grass Waterway**
- **2- No-Till Management Systems**
- **1-Terrace**
- **1-Waste Facility Cover**
- **1-Grazing Plan**
- **1-Windbreak Shelterbelt**
- **Nutrient & Pest Management**

WHIP-$5,947.60 obligated

3 Contracts

- **2-Native Grass Restoration**
- **1-Windbreak Shelterbelt**

GRP-$52,486.50 Obligated

5 Contracts