



Introduction

The Nicollet Soil and Water Conservation District is a legal Subdivision of State Government organized under provisions of Minnesota Statute 103C. The District is governed by a Board of Supervisors composed of five members nominated by the voters of the County, and who are responsible for directing all District activities. The board meets monthly on the first Wednesday of the Month.

Mission Statement

“To assist the landowners of Nicollet County in efficiently and effectively using the natural resources in order to increase the productive use of the cropland, pastureland, woodland, wildlifeland, urbanland, and recreationland, while maintaining and improving the soils base, water quality, tree production, wildlife, and the quality of life in the county.”

We submit to you this annual report for 2011.

2011 Annual Report

Nicollet Soil & Water Conservation District

(507)-931-2550

www.nicolletswcd.org

District Supervisors

John H. Kral
William Hohenstein
Eldon H. Brown
Bruce Hulke
Robby Gieseke

Area of Representation

Lafayette, West Newton, Ridgely Twp.
Lake Prairie, Traverse Twp. & City of St. Peter
Belgrade, Nicollet, Oshawa Twp.
Courtland, Granby Twp.
Bernadotte, Brighton, New Sweden Twp.

District Employees

Kevin Ostermann, District Manager
Kevin.Ostermann@nicolletswcd.org

Blake Honetschlager, District Technician
Blake.Honetschlager@nicolletswcd.org

Cooperating Agencies

Board of Water & Soil Resources

Thomas Fischer, Board Conservationist

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Jamie Rindels, District Conservationist
Joel Wurscher, Soil Conservation Technician

Nicollet County Farm Services Agency

Steve Luther, County Executive Director

Nicollet County Environmental Services

Mandy Landkamer, Department Head

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Joe Stangel, Area Wildlife Manager

Nicollet Soil & Water Conservation District
2011 Accomplishments

Tree Program

The Nicollet SWCD offered for sale different tree and shrubs species native to Minnesota. Producers purchased the trees to plant into windbreaks, urban and rural conservation, and wildlife food and habitat. Through the annual tree program the Nicollet SWCD is able to promote conservation practices and the value of forestry resources in preventing soil loss and improving water quality. The District sold over 8,000 trees, in 2011, and assisted 15 landowners with tree planting.

Cost-Share Programs

In 2011 the District emphasized the application of soil conservation practices such as: grassed waterways, water and sediment control basins, terraces, erosion control structures, animal waste control systems, and farmstead windbreaks. These practices have controlled erosion and reduced sedimentation while improving water quality. During the past year the District assisted landowners with plans and designs for different conservation practices. These Districts received funds from the State Cost Share Program and Rush River Project to complete the following practices:

- 14 Rock tile inlets installed in the Rush River Watershed.
- Provided sign up incentive on 38.1 acres of CRP
- Installed 1 Rain Garden in Lafayette at a cost of \$20,000.00
- Distributed 5 rain barrels to landowners in the Rush River Watershed
- 1 Water and Sediment Control Basins installed.
- 2 Terraces Surveyed.
- 2 Well sealing projects completed.
- 2.0 Acres of farmstead windbreaks installed using State Cost Share Dollars.
- Assisted in distributing \$304,352.25 in assistance to Nicollet County Landowners for Conservation practices, through the Federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program.
- Secured MN PCA 319 Grant Funding totaling \$260,975.00 for Conservation Practice Installation in the Middle Minnesota Watershed.
- Secured MNDOT Funding in the amount of \$330,000 to install Water Control Structures.
- Secured Clean Water Funding (CWF) funds in the amount of \$86,500.00 for Conservation Drainage Installation.
- Secured funding for 5 Wetland Reserve Program/Reinvest in Minnesota (WRP/RIM) Easements totaling \$2,848,066.00 on 736.4 acres.

- Completed 33 Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) Site Checks for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through a contribution agreement.

Environmental Education

Environmental education is an important part of our SWCD office. Classes and educational materials are offered to schools and churches across Nicollet County. 2011 activities included:

- Presented at 2 Career Day events for local High School Students.
- Presented to South Elementary School 1st Graders on the importance of trees, and donated a tree to each student to plant.
- Staff attended fall training secession for conservation at Breezy Point, MN.
- 2 Conservation newsletters published.
- Website updated monthly: www.nicolletswcd.org
- Staff attended Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District's annual meeting held in December at the DoubleTree Hotel Bloomington.

Wetland Conservation Act Program

The Nicollet SWCD assists cities, townships, citizens, and County departments in the administration of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act. District staff provides technical and administrative assistance for wetland related activities throughout Nicollet County. Common activities involved with the program include tile and drainage applications as well as wetland banking. The District has continued its commitment to ensure that staff is adequately trained and updated on current wetland rules and policy. In 2011, District Staff worked on 84 landowner drainage requests.