

Pipestone County Conservation & Zoning



2012 Annual Report



Mission: To Promote Conservation of Natural Resources through Education, Technical Assistance and Stewardship.

Staff

Kyle Krier, Environmental Administrator
Adam Ossefoort, SWCD Conservationist
Stephanie LaBrune, Administrative Assistant
Jesse DeGroot, Environmental/Solid Waste Tech

District Supervisors

Cal Spronk, Chairman
Ed Loll, Vice-Chairman
Joyce LaBrune, Secretary/Treasurer
Anna Mae Fritz, Programs
Ian Cunningham, PR&I / Area V Director

Introduction:

The Pipestone Soil and Water Conservation District was formed in 1952 and operates under MN Statute 103C. In 1997 the Conservation District and County Zoning Office were joined and now operate as the Pipestone County Conservation and Zoning Office. The District is co-located and works jointly with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This Annual Report provides a reflection of 2012's efforts and accomplishments.

The Pipestone SWCD Board meets every second Thursday of each month.

2 New Employees



Adam

Jesse

Pipestone SWCD hired two new staff in 2012, Adam Ossefoort was hired as the new SWCD Conservationist and Jesse DeGroot is our new Environmental Solid Waste Tech.

State Cost-Share Program Funds

In 2012 5 Shelterbelts were installed utilizing 2011 State Cost-Share Funds. Tree Project expenditures were \$10,460.

District Tree Program



Established tree planting

This year there were a total of approximately 10,000 trees sold. Trees were utilized for field windbreaks, farmstead / feedlot windbreaks, and wildlife habitat planting. District staff also sold and installed approximately 36,000 feet of tree fabric.

District Monitoring

Monthly reports from 11 Rain Gauge Observers were submitted to the State Climatologist and 10 DNR monitoring wells water depths were recorded monthly and submitted.

Missouri River Watershed Water Monitoring Grant

The Pipestone SWCD completed the second and final year of a MPCA Surface water assessment grant. Staff collected water readings and water samples at 8 sites within Pipestone and the surrounding counties. The grant was for fiscal years 2011-2012. Lab data has been submitted to MPCA along with final expenditure reports for reimbursements. The MPCA will be utilizing this and other data in a Missouri River Watershed report.

USDA Programs

District staff provided secretarial assistance to the NRCS throughout the year and also assisted the USDA in implementation and producer signup as well as the development of plans for programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), EQIP, and SAFE Programs. The SWCD also entered into a contribution agreement and completed the offsite wetland certified determinations on 80 AD1026 forms.

Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program

Throughout 2012, 14 local land owners utilized low interest Ag BMP loan dollars to implemented non-point source reduction projects. Projects included Ag waste, Septic Systems, and no-till equipment purchases. Altogether, approximately \$355,575.00 was loaned out in 2012.

Educational Events

This year Chris & Clare Veldhuizen along with their children were awarded the Conservation Farmer of the Year award program. The Veldhuizen's market 25,000 swine a year & farm 1800 acres. They are leaders in the Ag industry and were chosen for this award for their community involvement and eagerness to conserve our water and reduce pollution. Chris says, "Each acre of land is unique and needs to be treated as its own, the same farming practices just don't work on every acre." The Veldhuizen's run a fully integrated operation and utilize Manure Management Practices by applying all of their manure to their crops and in turn utilizing the crops as feed. They've also converted 4 acres of pasture to wildlife habitat, preserved 20 acres of native prairie, and implemented controlled drainage systems on over 240 acres.

A contract is maintained with the local Radio station which provides the airing 2 or more 30 second conservation PSA per day.

District staff provided funding and assistance at the annual Environmental Fair. 1500+ students from the South West region of Minnesota attended the educational event.

In 2012 two conservation newsletters were distributed to 1000 county landowners, producers and residents. The newsletter provided conservation education, increased awareness of programs, and informed the public of Federal, State and County requirements.

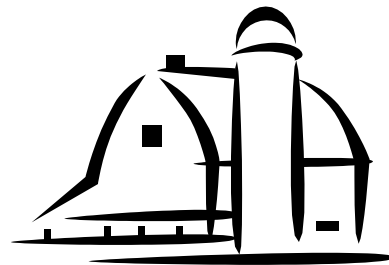
County Planning & Zoning

Within the County Planning and Zoning Department 75 land use permits were issued. There were also 5 variances and 4 conditional use hearings held throughout the year.



Local Water Management Funds

Approximately \$6000 in program dollars was utilized to provide 50% cost-share assistance to seal 22 abandoned wells. The remaining \$12,000 LWM & County Levy Funds were utilized to pay for the Ecology bus to visit county schools and educate students on environment and conservation, daily conservation PSA's were also aired on local radio station. Staff also conducted water monitoring of Split Rock reservoir.



Feedlot Delegation

Pipestone County is delegated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to oversee and manage our 489 feedlots. During 2012 staff conducted 40 onsite compliance inspections, issued 2 interim and 5 construction short form permits. Staff also assisted 3 local producers with manure spreader calibrations. Feedlot visits were conducted with interested land owners to develop feedlot improvements. In addition one producer installed a manure storage bunker with the engineering and technical assistance of the Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area.

Geographic information systems (GIS)

GIS services were provided to County departments and City of Pipestone. Services

provided included loading of software and layers, creation of projects, and training of staff. Staff also create and maintain layers along with created maps as requested.

Drill Rental Program



In 2012 the District's Brillion drill was rented out to 15 producers and approximately 225 acres of permanent and rotational grasses/hay was planted with it.

Rock River Watershed



Rock River Manure Expo Field Day

A Clean Water Legacy grant was received by the Rock County SWCD to clean up impaired waters within the Rock River. The Pipestone SWCD held a manure management field day in conjunction with the Rock SWCD to educate livestock producers and commercial manure applicators about proper manure handling to prevent pollution within the Rock River

Watershed. Pipestone SWCD continued to promote the incentive programs from the Clean Water Legacy Grant. Ten producers have taken advantage of first and second year incentives on manure management plans. Four more producers not previously signed up took advantage of the liquid manure flow meter incentive and four more also took advantage of the solid manure spreader calibrations. The grant period will be coming to a close in June of 2013.

Clean Water Legacy SSTS Grant Program

The district distributed approximately \$18,500 of Low- Income Clean Water grants to 4 residents within the county that updated their septic system in 2012. The low-income grant program is offered to all of the residents within Pipestone County who income qualifies under the USDA Moderate Income guidelines for Pipestone County. The program provides these homeowners a chance to obtain up to 50% of the cost of a septic system so that they can update or replace their septic systems so that they are in compliance with the state rules.

Clean Water Legacy Feedlot Cost-Share Program



In 2012 the Pipestone SWCD was awarded \$30,407 in Clean Water Legacy Feedlot Water Quality funds. The project funds were utilized on an open lot runoff control structure and filter strip. The total project costs were \$39,307. The producer was awarded \$26,382.00 from the

Clean Water Land & Legacy Funds, the S.W. Prairie T.S.A was paid \$3,525 for their Technical Assistance expertise on the project and \$300 was paid to the district for administration of the project.

Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) Program



Subsurface Sewage Treatment System

Site inspections were completed for verification of soil and system installation certification for 49 Septic systems. The office distributed approximately \$120,000 of county low interest loan dollars for 13 system updates.

New Tree Building



Pipestone SWCD has never had a building of its own until now. Previously the SWCD has utilized various spaces at either the fairgrounds or county highway department for trees, equipment, and other materials. In 2012 a new SWCD building was constructed for storage of

equipment and materials, in addition a cooler for tress was also included as part of the building.

New Household Hazardous Waste and Recycling Building



The Pipestone County Recycling Center

After 10 years of planning construction began mid 2012 and was completed just before the end of 2012 on the new Pipestone County Household Hazardous Waste and Recycling Facility. This is a less than 90 day HHW facility, allowing us to collect HHW throughout the year along with Electronics, Appliances, Fluorescent lights / ballasts, Lead Acid Batteries, & Empty pesticide containers. In 2012 Pipestone County collected and recycled 6.88 tons of electronics, 2.17 tons of florescent bulbs, 1.56 tons of ballasts, and 39 tons of major household appliances. We also held 2 household hazardous waste (HHW) collections this year and collected 1.7 tons of hazardous material and 3.3tons of paint. A new radio contact was also purchased to allow us to run daily PSA's on the promotion of recycling and waste reduction.

Walk In Access Program



In 2012, Pipestone SWCD enrolled 8 local land owners in DNR's Walk in Access program. From the 8 land owners enrolled a total of 1,393 acres were opened to public access for hunting during the 2012 season.