



Lac qui Parle Soil & Water Conservation District 2008 SPRING Newsletter

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The mission of the Lac qui Parle Soil and Water Conservation District is to take available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user to help him/her protect Lac qui Parle's natural resources.

Here we go again...

The Lac qui Parle SWCD is experiencing staff changes again this spring. Sonja has decided it's time to retire and leaves us at the end of May. You are invited to join co-workers and SWCD Supervisors in extending best wishes at a **Retirement Open House** from 1 to 4 on **May 29** in the SWCD office in Madison.

The Board of Supervisors named Terry Wittnebel to fill the very big shoes Sonja is leaving behind. She will assume the position of District Manager effective June 1. In addition to managerial duties and administration of programs such as the LqP County Water Plan, Terry will continue the District's education activities. The new face greeting you when you come into the office is Debbie Hoffman. The expertise she brings will help make the transition within the office go more smoothly. Welcome her to the conservation family!

See what they have to say elsewhere in this newsletter.



coming & going

District Supervisors

John Rebehn....Chairperson

Ed Radermacher....Vice-chair

LeRoy SchuelkeSecretary

Bob Ludvigson....Treasurer

Jeff JohnsonPublicity & Information

District Staff

Sonja Farmer....District Manager

Terry Wittnebel....Administrative Assistant

Leslie Kvidera....District Technician

Curtis Nordaune....District Eng. Tech

Deborah Hoffman....Program Assistant

Assisted by **NRCS Staff**

Burton Hendrickson....District Conservationist

JonPaul Pringle....Soil Conservation Technician

NEW --- Native Buffer Cost-Share Program

This program has been started to restore native prairies in this region. This is a state cost share program with 75% establishment costs being provided and a rental rate that follows CRP guidelines. Cellulose energy production is included as part of this program and may be utilized in the future as technology becomes available. Expiring conservation programs such as CRP may be able to enroll with only reseeding needed to meet the standards of the native cost share program. Give us a call or stop in for more information.

EQUIP Tillage Participants Don't forget to give the office a call as soon as you have completed planting that field!!

upgrade sewage systems !

Low Interest Funds
still available

Contact Mary at the LqPYB Clean Water Partnership
320-598-3319

Interested in canoeing the Lac qui Parle River in June with the LqPYB Clean Water Partnership?!



Call Mary at the Courthouse for more information
320-598-3319

Good-bye

This is kind of like the beginning of *A Tale of Two Cities* - it was the best of times, it was the worst of times. I will be leaving the SWCD after working here 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ years. I've always felt blessed because this has been a job that I really enjoyed, was fulfilling, challenging and gave me opportunity to work with terrific people as co-workers and as customers.

The job grew for me - I started working 16 hours a week (Larry was surprised when I actually applied for the position!) The next year, my time was increased to 20 hours a week and I reached a GS 1-1 on the pay scale; the next year 30 hours and then full-time. I was able to advance to Office Manager and then to District Manager.

Probably the second best thing about the job (second to the people I've met and worked with) is that it has continually changed. I started doing typing - on a typewriter - filing and expanding the SWCD's educational programs. We now do our reporting over the internet, use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for planning and reporting and have, over the years, worked with and administered a host of different programs to help you protect the resources of Lac qui Parle County.

I appreciated the training and opportunity to grow. Digital photography, computer, leadership training - just to name a few - have all been things I could use in the District and also apply in my personal life and now into retirement.

So, it is with joy and sadness that I will be leaving the SWCD the end of May. The SWCD and resources (and I think the *people* of LqP County are the major resource we have) will always be close to my heart.

and hello

Hello. My name is Debbie Hoffman, and I was recently hired as the Program Assistant for the Lac qui Parle Soil & Water Conservation District. Some of my duties in addition to assisting with the various conservation programs will include the finance, payroll and receptionist. Working with the public is not new to me, as I worked for the Bellingham School District for almost 20 years. I bring with me bookkeeping and finance experience, as well as grant writing and a general knowledge of how government programs work.

I live in Odessa with my husband Gary and our 2 children. Gary is employed by the Big Stone SWCD as their District Technician. Our son Ethan is 18 and is preparing for his high school graduation. He enjoys being out of doors, and is an avid hunter and fisherman. He will be attending SDSU in Brookings SD this fall for Fisheries and Wildlife. Theresa is 15, and participates in basketball and softball. She enjoys spending time with her friends, whether in real life or on the computer. She has a knack for editing and distorting pictures she takes with her digital camera.

I look forward to working with the people of Lac qui Parle County, and assisting them in their conservation practices to protect our natural resources. I am excited to be here, and anticipate a good working relationship with the local land user, SWCD staff and supervisors.

Don't forget - the Wetland Conservation Act applies to everyone! Before starting **any** project, check at the Environmental Office to see if your proposed project may impact a wetland.

*FUNDS FROM THE LAC QUI PARLE COUNTY
WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN HELP SPONSOR
THE MAILING OF THIS NEWSLETTER.*

Water Quality Plan Revision in Home Stretch

The Lac qui Parle County Resource Commission worked hard early this spring on a revision of the County's Local Comprehensive Water Management Plan. We looked at the goals and actions needed to meet those goals in managing the waters of the County. The Plan revision was submitted to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. The Board will act upon it in May. A Public Hearing was held March 31, and despite the bad weather and roads, a fair number of people were present to review and discuss proposed actions.

The State of Minnesota supports Water Plan Management financially. We have received \$20,346 each year since 2003 and the County provides a levy match – in 2008 it is \$2,185. The Resource Commission decides how we “invest” that money in water-related projects.

After the Board of Water and Soil Resources has approved the Plan revision, the County Commissioners will be asked to pass a resolution adopting the revision.

Photo Contest Winners



The photos entered into our photography contest in April were great! Thank you to all the amateur photographers out there who participated. Photos submitted were excellent examples of the beauty and diversity of nature in our own backyard. We will be using the photos in a variety of ways in our District programs, so watch for them.

Del and Anna Mae Thielke, Dawson, served as our volunteer judges. Thank you!

Winning 1st place in *Children Connect to Nature* category is Rachel Croatt (boy ice fishing, below); 2nd place is Cheri Tuckett (children and house finch). *Citizens of Nature* 1st place winner is Rachel Croatt (field of geese, above). *Beauty of Nature* 1st place winner is Rachel Croatt (winter stream, above); Jessica Kells won both 2nd place (corn field) and 3rd (sun on grass) in this category.

All photo entries were displayed at the Lac qui Parle Outdoor Expo where everyone had a chance to vote for their favorite for the People's Choice Award. The People's Choice winner was the field of geese photo taken by Rachel Croatt.



Alternative Tile Intake Cost Share & Incentive Program

Traditional open surface tile intakes can be significant contributors of sediment and phosphorus to our ditches, streams & lakes. Give alternatives a try!

* rock inlet *pattern tile without open intake *side ditch inlet

\$75 Design cost share

\$400 incentive per open intake replaced

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Tree and Shelter Belt Care

Remember tree care on your new plantings. Young trees are still establishing root systems and may need extra watering. They may also need protection from deer and rabbits. Check plantings often. Most problems when detected early can be controlled without having to replace dead trees. Don't forget about established stands ...a little pruning and thinning can go a long way to provide a healthy stand of trees for many years.

Native Grass Drill

Our native grass drill is available for planting native grasses. It is a no till drill and can be used to enhance or establish any native seeding conservation practice. Native grasses can be planted later in the year so call to reserve a date.

Ag Best Management Practices (BMP) Low Interest Loan Program

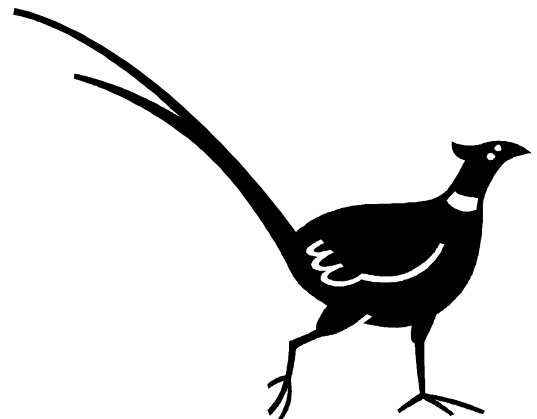
The County still has funds available to help owners apply Best Management Practices (BMPs). The Program has been around for over 15 years and we have been able to keep the money here when the loans have been repaid and revolve it here into new loans.

These are 3% interest loans that have been used in Lac qui Parle County to replace failing septic systems, manure tanks, conservation tillage equipment, no-till drills and conservation practices like terraces, water and sediment control basins, waterways and other engineered practices.

These loans are made through KleinBank, United Prairie Bank and State Bank of Bellingham. Although funds are limited, we'd like to put them to work for you. For more information, contact us.

Play it SAFE for Pheasants, Get Your Back Forty in Now!

Despite the expiration of 79,677 CRP acres in Minnesota since October 1 of last year, 6,365 acres have already been offered for enrollment in the new State Acres For wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) conservation practice, the Minnesota Back Forty Pheasant Habitat program. As part of the continuous enrollment portion of CRP, Minnesota has been allocated 23,100 acres for enrollment. Stop by the Conservation Office or give us a call for more information.



Call the Conservation Office if late snow or other factors kept you from completing your prescribed burn as scheduled this spring.