

Lac qui Parle Soil & Water Conservation District Spring 2011 Newsletter

122 Eighth Avenue South #1, Madison, MN 56256

telephone: 320-598-7321 x 3

www.lacquiparleswcd.org

The mission of the Lac qui Parle Soil and Water Conservation District is to take available technical, financial and educational resources, wherever 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.

Appointments Requested at NRCS Field Office

In an effort to better serve the NRCS field office clientele and promote more efficient scheduling of workload for our limited staff, we are encouraging people to call ahead and make an appointment with the staff person you wish assistance from. This will not only help the staff, but will assure you that staff will be available when you come. This lead time often allows some preliminary work to be completed and ready. Appointments and scheduled time will be honored as much as possible. Walk-ins are not prohibited, but will be subject to staff availability. Staff also have field responsibilities and at times are not in the office.

To set up an appointment please call 320-598-7321 x 3. If the person you want to meet with is not in, Deb Hoffman has access to the staff's calendars and will be able to schedule your appointment. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this effort. In the long run this will be very helpful to all concerned.



Blue Thumb Garden Party – **YOU** are invited!

Turn your "green thumb" into a "blue thumb"! Get tips for healthy lawns & gardens that have a better impact on water and wildlife, including **composting** & ways to **recycle rain**.

\$5 registration includes interesting guest speakers and tasty hors d'oeuvres.

May 19, 6-7:30, Creekside Garden Park, Canby

Call 320-598-7321 x 3 to register or
for more information

Sponsored by LqP, Yellow Medicine, & Lincoln SWCDs, NRCS, & LqPYB Clean Water Partnership

FREE Household Electronic Waste Collection

all TVs, computers, monitors, printers, fax machines, dvd/vcr players, keyboards

for LqP County residents only, proof of residency required

Monday & Wednesday 5:00-6:30 & first Saturday of each month 8-noon

May thru October 2011

Lac qui Parle County Demolition Landfill

LqP Environmental Office & MPCA 2010 Electronic Waste Grant

Funds from the LqP County Water Plan help sponsor the mailing of this newsletter.

Please plan now!

Reminder: our cost share programs are changing! Money is available, but it's a longer process to access funds and YOU must be involved from the beginning. The days are gone when you could stop by the office to apply for cost share in the spring, and have a finished project before winter. Long range planning does NOT mean you are committed, so please come in with your "probably" and "maybe" and "I think I need" situations. (This change applies to both federal and state funds.)

EQIP and Conservation Construction Practices

EQIP applications can be taken year round, and are considered for funding when a cut-off date is announced. We are getting word that the next cut-off date for funding EQIP applications may be sometime this fall. Funded EQIP applicants are required to complete at least one of their practices within the first year of the contract. The idea behind the fall cut-off/funding date is to provide producers a better time frame to get a practice completed within the first twelve months, keeping them in compliance with their EQIP contract.

Along with the possible change in the application cut-off time is a shift in NRCS policy that conservation construction practices such as Water & Sediment Control Basins, Terraces or Grassed Waterways need to have been viewed by the NRCS field office staff before the producer can apply for EQIP. We have heard rumblings that we may be required to have construction practices surveyed and designed before taking EQIP applications for them. This means that we may not be able to take applications for these construction practices just prior to the cut-off date, like we have in the past.

With the excessive runoff that occurred this spring, sensitive cropland sites may be showing some signs of erosion. An excellent time to look for these areas is while completing your spring fieldwork. If you see areas prone to erosion that you would like to control, make a note of these and come into the office and talk with us. In spite of lengthening program timeline, EQIP may be the answer for you.

District Supervisors

Ed Radermacher....Chairperson
Jeff Johnson....Vice-chair
LeRoy Schuelke....Secretary
Bob Ludvigson....Treasurer
Paul Schwendemann....PR&I

District Staff

Terry WittnebelDistrict Manager
Leslie Kvidera....District Technician
Deborah Hoffman....Program Assistant
Curtis Nordaune....District Eng. Tech

Assisted by **NRCS Staff**

Burton Hendrickson....District Conservationist
Gary Hoffman....Soil Conservation Technician

THANK YOU to our 2011 Affiliates!

Business Memberships:

Farmers Co-op Elevator, Bellingham
Farmers Mutual Telephone, Bellingham
Klein Bank, Madison
Lac qui Parle Co-op Oil, Dawson
Lund Implement, Madison
Madison Bottling
United Prairie Bank, Madison

Friend of Conservation Memberships:

Peggy Crosby
Dawson Truck Parts, Dawson
Erickson Chevrolet, Dawson
Erickson Chevrolet, Madison
Larry & Sonja Farmer
Jeff Johnson
Breberg Agency, Dawson
Bob & Julie Ludvigson
Paul & Lori Schwendemann

RIM-WRP Partnership

The Minnesota Reinvest In Minnesota Program (RIM) along with the Federal Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) created a partnership to restore drained wetlands. The RIM-WRP Program Partnership restores and protects drained wetlands, using state and federal dollars to restore wetlands back to their original condition. Restoring a wetland may be as easy as filling in a ditch or blocking some drain tile, and after the wetland has been restored it will be protected with an easement so the benefits can be realized for years to come. Wetland benefits include erosion control, slow runoff water minimizing flood levels, ground water recharge and discharge, natural filter, wildlife habitat, recreation and education.

While it is nearly impossible to put a dollar value on wetlands, the lack of wetlands is noticeable. From keeping water clean to wildlife benefits, Minnesota with its hunting and fishing heritage would not be the same without our wetlands.

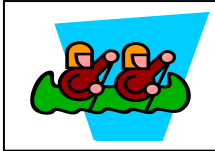
Canoe, Cook, Camp a Gal's Get-Away Adventure on the Lac qui Parle River

*Whether novice or expert, 17 or 71, this adventure is for you!
Get up close and personal with the Lac qui Parle River.*

* Paddle from LqP County Park to LqP State Park (paddling/safety lessons included)

*Camp overnight *Dutch oven & campfire cooking

*Learn about the river history *Enhance birdwatching skills *Outdoor photography tips



only \$35 registration
Canoes, tents, food and cooking equipment provided
June 17-18, noon to noon



Space limited to 12 participants, so call now! LqP SWCD 320-598-7321 x3

Continuous Conservation Reserve Program Wetlands

It appears that we may be facing a later and possibly wetter spring planting season this year. Commodity prices have approached record levels, but it appears that almost all inputs have also been on the rise. Farming has always been a high risk venture because of so many uncertainties. Weather is something none of us can control. Efforts to address water shortage could involve irrigation, and too much water could involve installing drainage. Some areas are precluded from drainage due to wetland rules or just not economically feasible. Many of these sites are very inefficient to farm year in and year out. If you actually penciled out how much money and time is put into some of these marginal areas each year with unreliable returns, would you find that some are just money sinks? If that is the case for you, explore possible options in the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP).

There have been some recent rule changes involving size of wetlands that may have opened up CCRP eligibility options not available before. If a site has hydric soils and at least 3 years of accepted crop history in the past 10, it could be eligible even if over 5 acres in size. There are several other financial incentives such as signing bonus, 20% boost in rental rate, and up to 90% of costs to get contracts established. With recent rate increases on the soil rentals it may be worth your time to explore the options. You could get a CCRP contract that will provide a steady stable income on some marginal acres over a 10-15 year period, rather than boom or bust, with mostly bust. There certainly is no harm in investigating your options!

*When you can't reuse, can't recycle,
can't compost....then you need*

Lac qui Parle County Landfill Hours

April 25th thru Fall, 2011

Monday & Wednesday evenings 5:00-6:30

First Saturday of each month 8:00-noon
(excluding holidays ... weather permitting)

Pre-Demolition Building Inspections are recommended and completed at no charge.

Call Kenny Fernholz

Lac qui Parle County Courthouse
320-598-3012

Public Comment on Lac qui Parle River & YellowBank River TMDL watch for meeting announcements

What's a TMDL? Call Mary at the LqPYB Clean Water Partnership 320-598-3319 for information

*May is Arbor Month
Plant a tree!*

Don't forget, the **Wetland Conservation Act** applies to EVERYONE!

Before starting work, check at the Environmental Office to see if your proposed project may impact a wetland.

SWCD Funding – Where does it come from?

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.

To accomplish our mission, the Lac qui Parle Soil and Water Conservation District works with the (NRCS) and other agencies. The District has three major sources of funding: BWSR (Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources); Lac qui Parle County; local producers/landowners.

BWSR funds (or state tax dollars) are used for general operation as well as flow-through funds to you in the form of cost share for projects that prevent erosion and protect water quality. It also helps pay for technical planning assistance and required follow up for the ten+ years of the lifetime of those projects.

The District has no taxing authority (which is different from Watersheds and School Districts), so the LqP County Commissioners support the work of the SWCD by designating an annual amount to the District. County funds are used to help maintain continuity of services and assist with day to day operations.

Finally, a small portion of District funding comes from local producers and landowners when they purchase and install conservation project trees from the SWCD.

District staff also search for additional sources of funding to address specific resource needs, such as Clean Water Legacy (constitutional amendment) and other grant sources. The Lac qui Parle Soil and Water Conservation District is a service agency, with limited opportunity to generate funding based on resale or rent of equipment.

To help accomplish our mission, the District strives to educate the public on the importance of protecting Lac qui Parle's natural resources, and to assist with best management practices. We look beyond our existing programs to meet your needs. We are here for you, whether you are the producer, landowner, an interested individual, part of a group, or organization. Let's work together, to help protect Lac qui Parle's natural resources. If you have any questions about our programs, or would like to know more about where our funding comes from, please give us a call at 320-598-7321 x3, stop by our office at 122 South 8th Ave. in Madison, or visit our website at <http://www.lacquiparleswcd.org/>.