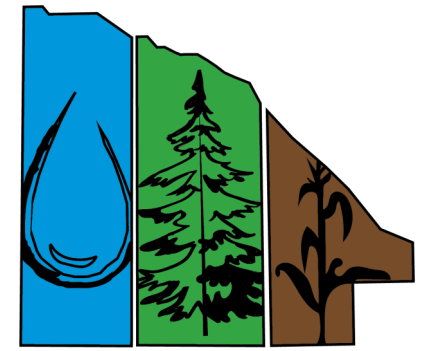


**Lac qui Parle  
Soil and Water  
Conservation District**



**2021 Annual Report**



**Our mission is to provide conservation opportunities for landowners of Lac qui Parle County through creative stewardship, protection programs and utilization of the resources to foster soil and water quality improvement in the community.**

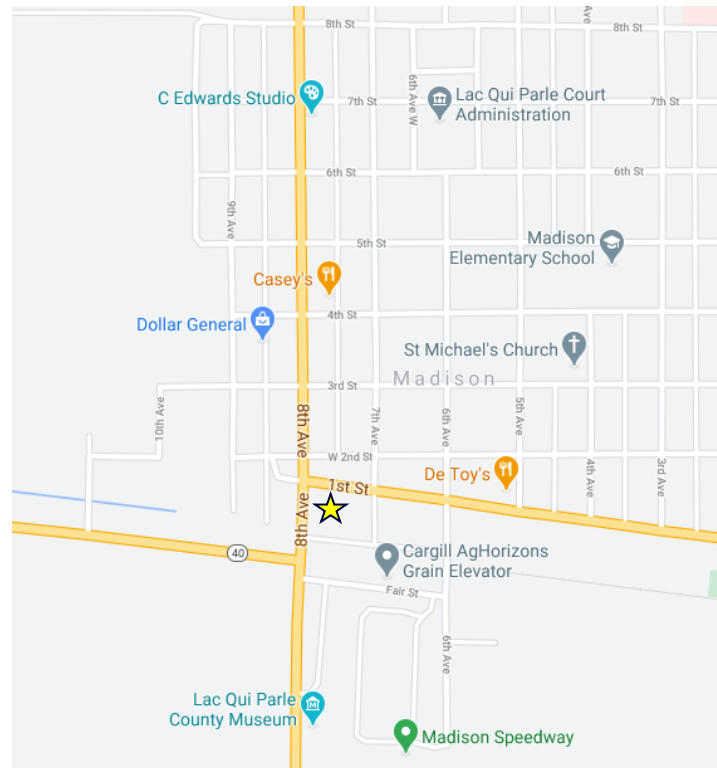
The Lac qui Parle Soil Conservation District received its charter from the State of Minnesota April 19, 1950. At that time it was made up of 4 Townships in the southeastern part of the County and shared an office and a U.S.D.A. employee (District Conservationist) with the Yellow Medicine Soil Conservation District in Clarkfield. Both Districts grew to include all Townships and Cities within their respective Counties and the office split, the Yellow Medicine District remaining in Clarkfield and the Lac qui Parle District opening in Madison with a U.S.D.A. District Conservationist in each office.

Agency names change, personnel changes and programs change but the underlying purpose of helping landowners manage private land and helping local units of government manage public lands by planning and installing practices to protect natural resources continues. Staff provides education, technical assistance and channels financial assistance to individuals, the County, cities and townships.

The SWCD continues to cooperate with the United State Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service under a Memorandum of Understanding whereby full-time technical assistance and administration is furnished to the SWCD by the NRCS Field Staff in Madison and additional staff located in the area and state offices. The Lac qui Parle SWCD is co-located in the USDA Ag Service Center with the NRCS and Farm Service Agency at 122 8th Ave South, Suite 1, Madison, Minnesota.



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## Mini workshops at the Fair



The Lac qui Parle County Fair is a great opportunity to connect with landowners and residents. The "Mini State Fair" brings in a crowd that the SWCD may not typically reach with our message. This year the SWCD hosted mini workshops at our booth. At designated times over three days the SWCD hosted sessions on tree maintenance, native mussels, and the rainfall simulator. We appreciate our partners from NRCS allowing us to use the Rainfall simulator for this event.



## Tree and Grass Program Update

The weather in 2021 cooperated and allowed the SWCD to exceed goals for tree and grass planting. District technicians were busy assisting landowners with CRP and buffer establishment in the spring and fall. With nearly perfect planting conditions, the District was able to seed 509 acres of native grasses and forbes. In addition to the grass seedings, the SWCD helped landowners install trees to establish windbreaks and shelterbelts around the county. SWCD staff planted over 1,700 trees. All staff helped plant trees this year providing 650 hours of technical assistance to landowners.



## Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

The work from our 2020 CREP sign ups continues. Our 130 acre piece was seeded with three diverse mixes this past spring. Construction is set to begin in Spring 2022 and will create multiple wetlands, rock weirs and ditch plugs. Staff intends to work with BWSR on site to see the construction through to completion. Our smaller CREP acreage will have 9 acres seeded this spring, with minor construction to be completed by the end of 2022 as well.

The 2021 RIM site inspection season offered opportunities to work with landowners on RIM enhancements. Multiple landowners have expressed interest in creating better management plans and are partaking in enhancement activities such as properly timed burns, diversity interseedings and shrub installations for wildlife.

## Lac qui Parle moves ahead with One Watershed One Plan

### The Lac qui Parle—Yellow Bank Partnership hosted public kick-off meeting in September.

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Partnership hosted the public kick-off meeting in September at the Dawson Library. This officially started the Comprehensive Watershed Management planning process.

The public was invited to join the Partnership to learn more about the processes and provide input on their priorities for the plan. Houston Engineering provided an overview of the planning process and how the public comments will be incorporated in the plan. The partnership also published a survey for those that were unable to attend in person. 29 people participated in the meeting. Comments were received from an additional 35 people.



## 2021 Buffer Enforcement Update

Lac qui Parle County is 98% compliant as of December 31, 2021.



Through continued compliance monitoring we have gotten to the point where we are not taking on many new buffer seedings. Through cooperation with the Lac qui Parle—Yellow Bank Watershed District, we have been able to gain 98% compliance. This year we seeded buffers for 3 landowners as part of a ditch cleanout project and added one new buffer seeding. We have continued assisting landowners with mapping, seed orders and technical assistance when needed.

We focused our on the ground inspection efforts on 7 townships, (Yellow Bank, Agassiz, Walter, Perry, Augusta, Arena, Mehurin and Garfield) with random spot checks throughout the southern half of the county. We hope that compliance will continue to rise as we proceed to monitor and enforce the Buffer law. In 2022, the District plans to continue reminding the public about best management practices and benefits of buffers through newspaper articles.

## Aquatic Invasive Species

This year saw a continuation of the great partnership between the SWCD, local 4H groups, DNR and the public. A canoe trip was held at Big Stone state park where students used the vegetation rake to collect and identify AIS such as curly leaf pondweed.

Monitoring continued at Marsh Lake which saw a dry year on top of a draw down- but did not see any new AIS infestations. Hopefully the draw down was able to help minimize carp levels in the lake.

Staff put on a series of 6 interactive and informative presentations at the county fair as a collaboration between 4H and AIS prevention staff.

The ice fishing tournament at Del Clarke Lake saw record numbers, with hundreds of adults and kids educated on local AIS impacts and prevention. It was a great end to the 2021 year!



## AgBMP Loan Program

In 2021, Lac qui Parle SWCD approved \$176,000 in loan funds.

The AgBMP Loan Program provides low-interest loans to farmers and rural landowners for the purpose of water quality improvement projects. Eligible projects may include septic system upgrades, conservation farm equipment, manure handling equipment, and engineered water quality improvement practices. The SWCD administers the program locally in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and local lenders. In 2021, the SWCD authorized more than \$176,000 in loan funds.

## Staff Changes

**Burt Hendrickson retired from NRCS after 34 years of service.**

Burton Hendrickson retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service on December 31, 2021. Burt worked for NRCS for 34 years in Minnesota. He worked in multiple field offices over his tenure. 29 of his 34 years were spent in Lac qui Parle County. Burt was first hired as a Soil Conservationist and moved into the District Conservationist role. He saw a lot of changes in staff and technology over his years. We appreciated his knowledge of the county and the history of the programs. Congratulations on your retirement, Burt!



# What have we done together?

This list falls well short of depicting all of the accomplishments of the SWCD in the past year. There are countless accomplishments each day through ongoing activities and initiatives including, but not limited to:

- ◆ Attendance and participation in One Watershed, One Plan for the Lac qui Parle and Yellow Medicine
- ◆ Providing cost-share for on the ground practices
- ◆ Coordination of education events for communities and schools
- ◆ Representation of the district and state in the Conservation Partnership
- ◆ Ongoing technical support for the Minnesota Buffer Law
- ◆ Continued tree and grass planting programs
- ◆ Provided financial assistance to residents for drinking water protection programs



## Board of Supervisors

- Chair:** Mike Croatt  
**Vice President:** Rosemary Weber  
**Secretary:** Daryl Schutte  
**Treasurer:** Amy Bacigalupo  
**PR & I:** Danny Larson

## SWCD Staff

- District Manager:** Chessa Frahm  
**Program Assistant:** Sheri Laechelt  
**Resource Specialist:** Rhyan Schicker  
**Resource Specialist:** Quintin Peterson

## Partnership Staff

- Pheasants Forever:** Sara Reagan (resigned April 2021)  
**NRCS:** Burton Hendrickson (retired December 2021)



## Board Spotlight

Danny Larson was appointed to serve as the Area 2 supervisor. Danny replaced Ed Radermacher following his retirement at the end of 2020. Danny as quickly become an asset to our board providing insight from his previous board involvement and knowledge of farming practices. Welcome Danny!



# 2021 Financial Summary

	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>	551,385	613,232
<b>Expense</b>	488,903	492,184
<b>Net income</b>	62,482	121,048

The SWCD's elected officials considered many factors when setting the fiscal-year 2021 budget. Some of the economic factors taken into account for the 2021 budget included: sales of trees and tree mats, state funding (new grants: local capacity, buffer, water quality certification grant, etc.), federal funding and the county allocation. Expense factors include expenses, employee salary increases, and health insurance benefits offered to the employees.

The actual expenditures were \$5,376 more than the final budgeted amounts. Revenues were \$67,858 more than budgeted. Fluctuations are expected based on the needs of the consumers and availability of grants. Projects also depend on the weather. 2021 financials are subject to audit.

2021 Budget							
	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	Fund Source				
			County Support	Local Funds <sup>1</sup>	BWSR <sup>2</sup>	DNR <sup>3</sup>	Other Grants <sup>4</sup>
<b>Total Revenue</b>		\$ 483,527	\$ 121,745	\$ 97,901	\$ 219,945	\$ 43,936	\$ -
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Personal Services</b>							
Supervisor Compensation	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500				
Payroll Expenses	\$ 280,142	\$ 294,607	\$ 103,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 152,875	\$ 31,532	
<b>Operational Expenses</b>							
Capital Outlay - Equipment	\$ -	\$ 30,000.00		\$ 17,157	\$ 7,843	\$ 5,000	
Dues/Contributions	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,500			\$ 500	
Education/Outreach	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 4,500.00			\$ 2,000	\$ 2,500	
Training Expenses	\$ 13,211.00	\$ 7,900.00	\$ 2,289	\$ 350	\$ 4,761	\$ 500	
Insurance	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 1,456	\$ 6,344		\$ 700	
Office Maintenance	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 2,000.00			\$ 1,850	\$ 150	
Office Supplies	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,014.00		\$ 1,850		\$ 164	
Professional Services (Audit, IT)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00			\$ 4,700	\$ 300	
Rent	\$ 16,690.00	\$ 16,690.00			\$ 15,300	\$ 1,390	
Supervisor Mileage	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500				
Telephone/Internet/Postage	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,200.00			\$ 2,900	\$ 300	
Utilities	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00			\$ 1,100	\$ 100	
TSA	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500				
Cost-Share	\$ 23,869.00	\$ 19,416.00			\$ 19,416		
Tree and Grass Program <sup>5</sup>	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 65,000.00		\$ 65,000			
Vehicle Gas/Maintenance	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00			\$ 7,200	\$ 800	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		\$ 483,527	\$ 121,745	\$ 97,901	\$ 219,945	\$ 43,936	\$ -