

2009 PLAN OF WORK AND OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVE 1

To improve water quality in our lakes and streams and bodies of water.

- A. Continue to cooperate with the North Fork Crow River, Chippewa River, and the Sauk River watershed districts.

Pope SWCD receives monthly meeting minutes from North Fork Crow River. Chippewa River Watershed is a partner for the Clean Water Legacy fund, presented at the 2009 Pope-Stevens WaterFest, and partnered on grant applications. Holly Kovarik, Sauk River Watershed District, attended a monthly meeting to explain SRWD's projects and offer opportunities for partnership.

- B. Continue as LGU for the 1991 Water Conservation Act.

The Board of Supervisors passed a motion at their July 21, 2009 meeting to act as the local LGU that reviews recommendations from the WCA Technical Team. Landowners will submit a complete application to Pope SWCD; the Technical team will review the application, make recommendations to Pope SWCD Supervisors for approval/denial. BWSR will act as the local Appeals Board for formal appeals.

- C. Work with the local lake associations and Pope County Coalition of Lake Associations (C.O.L.A.).

Pope SWCD Staff attended the annual C.O.L.A. meeting in August 2009 and fall meeting in September. Staff is keeping C.O.L.A. members abreast of the Pope County 8 Lake TMDL study progress and acting as a conduit to distribute results. Staff presented information for lakescaping cost share assistance at the September 2009 meeting.

- C. Continue to cooperate with the North Fork Crow River, Chippewa River, and the Sauk River watershed districts.

Receive monthly meeting minutes and agendas from North Fork Crow River and ask for guidance to develop a septic system inspection program. Coordinate the Clean Water Legacy project and include the Chippewa River Watershed Project in the Pope County 8 Lake TMDL Study. Executive director for the Sauk River Watershed district attended a monthly meeting to outline their programs and potential partnership opportunities. Staff from North Fork Crow River and Chippewa River assisted with presentations at the annual Pope-Stevens WaterFest.

- D. Assist Water Plan Coordinator with high priority watersheds and buffer strip projects.

Provided Technical assistance to the City of Glenwood to develop sediment basins and referred them Chippewa River Watershed to matching funds.

- E. Work with the Pope County Land & Resources Management Department to help protect and educate the public about water resource concerns.

Reviewed existing water plan, hosted Pope-Stevens WaterFest, and submitted a grant application for the City of Glenwood citing findings in the Pope Water Protection plan.

- F. Continue to assist DNR with Groundwater Quality Monitoring.

Pope SWCD staff continues to monitor 22 wells throughout Pope County.

- G. Work to improve impaired waters within the county.

Pope SWCD administers the Clean Water Legacy program to install buffer strips for areas in the Chippewa River Watershed District. Information gathered through the Pope County 8 Lake TMDL Study will be used to implement programs that improve impaired waters.

- H. Pursue funding and technical training to do a TMDL study or impaired water improvement projects.

Staff is the administrator for the Pope County 8 Lake TMDL Study. Duties include arranging public meetings, hosting stakeholders meetings and using the Pope SWCD website as a host for study updates.

- I. Encourage installation of alternative tile intakes.

Interested landowners were referred to Chippewa River Watershed to secure cost share dollars for alternative tile intakes.

OBJECTIVE 2

Help reduce water erosion and improve water quality.

- A. Install one hundred acres of filter strips.

Through the Clean Water Legacy program 53.5 acres of filter strips were installed in target area in 2009.

- B. Install fifteen water and sediment control structures.

Pope SWCD assisted the City of Glenwood with securing funding for a two-cell sediment basin with to control Stormwater runoff.

- C. Assist in implementing the Pope County 110B Water Plan.

Pope SWCD continues to work with Pope county Land and Resource office to implement best management practices listed in the Plan.

- D. Promote Cost Share practices at the Pope County Fair.

2009 Pope County Fair booth display included a display and handouts with cost share program information. The cost share program information is also on the Pope SWCD website. News articles were published in the Pope County Tribune and Belgrade Observer.

- E. Assist Pope County Land and Resource Management Office with projects such as Lake Leven Watershed Project, Trappers Run, and Impaired Waters within the county.

Lake Leven and Trappers Run is included in the Pope County 8 Lake TMDL study. Additional lakes included in the study are: Malmedal, Strandness and Pelican (Trappers Run); Reno, Gilcrest, Ann and Emily. Information gathered from this study will be used to implement remediation measures; landowner education and future grant applications.

OBJECTIVE 3

Continue with research work at the Herman Rosholt Research Farm.

- A. Investigate one new research project for the farm.

Pope SWCD partnered with Prairie Lakes Co-op to conduct crop production studies.

- B. Install irrigation system

Installed a linear irrigation system in 2009.

- C. Coordinate efforts with Prairie Lakes Cooperative for crop test plots.

Prairie Lakes Co-op conducted seed population and micro-nutrient testing for corn and soybeans at Rosholt.

- D. Coordinate with other entities to utilize the research facilities for education and training.

Worked with Prairie Lakes Co-op to conduct a field day in September 2009. Speakers included Jerry Write, irrigation specialist UofM, Grant Herfindahl, FSA, Kelly Erickson, Pope SWCD and Prairie Lakes Co-op staff.

OBJECTIVE 4

Reduce point source pollution from feedlots.

- A. Recommend/Design practices on two feedlots to reduce water pollution.

Four applications for cost share for feedlots are in process. Construction delayed due to wet fall conditions.

B. Provide recommendations to four feedlot operators on guidelines for Nutrient Management. These plans are needed by the operators to obtain MPCA feedlot permits.

Partnered with Pope County Feedlot Officer and NRCS for nutrient management plans for four (4) feedlots in Pope County.

C. Encourage staff to become Nutrient Management certified.

Pope SWCD partnered with NRCS and the Pope County Feed Lot Officer to provide nutrient management to feedlot operators.

D. Assist Pope County Land and Resource Management and the Pope County Feedlot Officer on feedlot issues.

Coordinated efforts with Pope County Feedlot Officer, NRCS and Pope SWCD to provide cost share assistance to feedlot operators in Pope County. Approved cost share for 4 feedlot operators in 2009.

OBJECTIVE 5

Promote and provide Irrigation Management Program to landowners and operators.

A. Secure enrollment of 1,000 acres in the program.

Goal not reached. Only one landowner requested Irrigation Management Assistance.

B. Promote the program in 2 articles (newspaper or newsletter).

Irrigation Management Program information was included in the Spring 2009 newsletter and on the Pope SWCD website.

C. Contact and send program information to all irrigators in Pope County.

Irrigators received the information in the Spring newsletter. Individual newsletters were not sent.

OBJECTIVE 6

Promote the Continuous CRP sign up program and General CRP program when available. Promote other programs such as EQIP, GRP, WRP, WHIP, and CSP including others as they are available.

A. Work with Chippewa River Watershed, Sauk River Watershed, and North Fork Crow River Watershed Districts and Pope County Land & Resource Management Department to provide information to help promote conservation.

Provided program information for above mentioned agencies to pass on to landowners.

B. Work with local sportsmen groups to promote wildlife habitat through the CRP programs including program and display for local banquets.

Attended the sportsmen's group annual banquets and provided conservation tree gift packs for drawings.

C. Distribute a newsletter to Pope County Landowners promoting all the programs available.

Pope SWCD distributed quarterly newsletters to landowners in Pope County. Each newsletter included program updates, contact information and eligible practices. The newsletters and program information is also available on the Pope SWCD website.

D. Publish two news articles regarding programs that are available.

Published news articles in the three Pope County newspapers as program information became available.

E. Promote CRP, CCRP programs through Wildlife Conservation Technician position and other programs as available.

Wildlife Technician contacted individual landowners to explain conservation practices and encourage them to participate in the programs.

- F. Promote Living Snow fences, the DOT initiative, and provide technical knowledge to the public.

Included Living Snow fence program information on the website, included program information in the Quarterly newsletter, and spoke with individual farmers.

OBJECTIVE 7

To reduce soil erosion by promoting conservation tillage and increasing the acres under conservation tillage in the county.

- A. Produce two newspaper articles concerning conservation tillage.
- B. Write conservation tillage newsletters and articles to be published in our local county-wide newspapers.

Sponsored the 'Secrets of Soil' poster contest and published results in the newsletter and three Pope County newspapers.

- C. Assist and Conduct Tillage Workshops as needed. /A for 2009
- D. Conduct Tillage Transect Survey as needed. N/A for 2009

OBJECTIVE 8

Continue with and expand the District's Conservation Tree Program.

- A. Establish two miles of field windbreaks.
- B. Install 10 miles of weed control fabric.
- C. Produce two annual publications which promote the District's Conservation Tree Program.

Included Conservation Tree Program in the Pope County Tribune and fall 2009 newsletter.

- D. Promote conservation trees at the Pope County Fair.
Pope SWCD hosted a drawing for 5-1 gallon blue spruce trees at the Fair Booth.
- E. Continue to sponsor trees for elementary student plantings for Arbor Month observation.
Handed out 175 trees and gave a presentation for Arbor Day in five 5th grade classrooms in Pope County
- F. Establish ten farmstead shelterbelts.
- G. Establish Wildlife Habitat plantings.
- H. Work with FSA, NRCS, and DNR Forestry to promote plantings.

OBJECTIVE 9

Continue to develop and streamline the District's native grass program.

- A. Provide a variety of quality certified seed mixes to ensure germination rates.
Researched certified seed mix vendors for the best value price.
- B. Provide operators with knowledge of how to establish and maintain their own plantings.
Match seed mix with soil conditions and mix per landowners' needs.
- C. Provide operators access to equipment needed.
Operators have the option to hire Pope SWCD to plant for them or rent a drill from Pope SWCD and plant the seed themselves. Landowners can purchase native grass seed from a vendor of their choice.
- D. Promote Native grass plantings.

Include grass seed mix and equipment rental on order forms and website. Provide landowners with cost share when available.

OBJECTIVE 10

Implement EEO and civil rights responsibilities resulting in strong working relationships with agencies, units of government and organizations.

- A. Review semiannually status of assistance by race & sex to check for deficiencies.
Reviewed status through direct client contact. Pope County historically has a 5% minority population that is encouraged to access program.
- B. Document correction in NRCS civil rights folder.
There were no corrections in 2009 to document.
- C. Review Memorandum of Understanding including CR, EEO, and Drug Free.
Memorandum of Understanding includes CR, EEO, and Drug Free verbiage.
- D. Include nondiscriminatory statements on public releases.
Included nondiscriminatory statement on news letter, stationary and public releases.
- E. Maintain a civil rights file with NRCS. *done*
- F. Review handicap accessibility issues annually.
Installed a railing for additional stability to access the building and painted the step for general access to the building. Signage was added to the handy-cap parking area.

OBJECTIVE 11

Continue to promote and educate the public and students about Conservation efforts in Pope County.

- A. Promote the Districts activities through a website, newsletters, and brochures.
Pope SWCD redesigned and updated their website in 2009. Quarterly newsletters were sent to area landowners. Program brochures are available in the office and distributed at meetings, sportsmen's banquets and the Pope County Fair.
- B. Educate students about conservation through educational Conservation Day and Water Festival Day.
Held WaterFest September 11th at the Pope County Fairgrounds. One Hundred-ninety-four students from Pope and Stevens County participated. Conservation Day was held September 24th at Scandia woods Environmental Learning Lab (SWELL). Both events were coordinated with Stevens County SWCD staff.
- C. Educate students about water quality through Nitrates in the Classroom education program with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.
This program was not offered in 2009.
- D. Promote conservation programs through displays at events include Pope County Fair, Area Ag Show, and other events as appropriate.
Pope County Fair booth included displays and brochures from NRCS, Pope SWCD programs and services, Cooperative Weed management Area display and weed identification brochures, and 'Secrets of Soil' student poster contest. Staff participated in the Prairie Lakes Co-op annual meeting trade show.

E. Provide educational materials and give presentations to elementary schools for annual poster contest.

Pope SWCD and NRCS staff completed presentations at four schools to 190 students in Pope County on soil and conservation to introduce them to "The Secrets of Soil" poster contest. Poster contest results published in the Pope County Tribune and Pope SWCD quarterly newsletter.

F. Provide and distribute Soil Stewardship materials to local churches.

Letters were sent to Pope County Ministerial Organization members explaining the Soil Stewardship program with an order form for service materials. Three churches participated in this program.

G. Select an Outstanding Conservationist for the year.

The Danielson Brothers were selected as the Outstanding Conservationist of the Year. They attended the 2009 MASWCD convention and their information with picture was printed in the Tribune and Times newspapers.

H. Participate and assist in the planning and organizational efforts of the Area II Envirothon/Jr. Envirothon.

Pope SWCD staff assisted with Area II Envirothon and Jr. Envirothon events held at Fergus Falls.

I. Promote and conduct Nitrate Testing Clinic(s).

Hosted Nitrate Testing Clinics at the Pope County Fair in August 2009 and again in the Pope SWCD office, October 13, 2009.

OBJECTIVE 12

Continue to promote better management of urban land and water to control stormwater runoff through the following.

A. Educate the public about rain gardens, retention ponds, pervious vs. impervious surfaces.

Distributed rain garden brochures at the Pope County Fair, assisted the City of Glenwood with securing funds for sediment basins, continued research on pervious surface materials for development/redevelopments. Include rain garden information on our website. And article on rain barrels to help conserve water was included in the Spring 2009 Newsletter.

B. Promote a recycling day as applicable. *NA*

C. Educate and Promote Lakescaping.

Staff met with Pope County Land and Resource Management office to review a site that would benefit from lakescaping to preserve the existing lakeshore. Staff attended the September COLA meeting and presented cost share program for lakescaping offered through Pope SWCD. Staff is discussing a potential project for the City of Glenwood.

D. Write articles about Best Management Practices for urban areas.

Included articles on rain barrels and composting two newsletters; distribute brochures on rain gardens at the Pope County Fair, presented water quality information at Glenwood United Parish for their 120th Anniversary. Programs to improve water quality are also on the website.