



POPE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT Conservation News



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IMPORTANT FSA AND NRCS PROGRAM DEADLINES

FSA Acreage reporting deadline for spring seeded crops, forage seeding and grass seeding-July 15

FSA ARCPLC-Enrollment deadline of August 1st

Participants with expiring 9/30/2016 Conservation Reserve Program contracts that plan to reenroll need to contact FSA by August 1, 2016 if they have not done so.

NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program-EQIP deadline to enroll is August 19th.

ANNUAL POSTER CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Pope SWCD staff presented this year's poster contest theme "We All Need Trees" to three schools Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa, Minnewaska, and Glacial Hills. The contest was open to 5th and 6th grade students. The winners are:



BBE and Overall Poster Contest Winners:

1st Place-Aynsley Preble

2nd Place-Lydia Mitchell

3rd Place-Ryli Laage



Minnewaska Poster Contest Winners:

1st Place-Dakota Holder

2nd Place-Berkley Steffen

3rd Place-Lily Anderson



Glacial Hills Poster Contest Winners:

1st Place-Devin Mikel

2nd Place-Miranda Longtin

3rd Place-Dominic Majjala

Buffer Process

Pope SWCD wants to encourage landowners to think about making their appointments now so that we can assist you in determining what applies for your land. We are about a year and a half away from the first deadline. After the deadline passes, buffers that are not implemented can be regulated.

1ST MAKE AN APPOINTMENT



2ND POPE SWCD STAFF REVIEWS YOUR FIELD MAPS



3RD FIELD VERIFICATION



4TH SEED SITES IDENTIFIED



Seeding Deadlines:
Public Waters 11/2017
Public Ditches 11/2018

MINNESOTA'S BUFFER LAW

What landowners need to know as of July 1, 2016.

- The DNR has mapped all public waters and ditches that will be subject to buffers by July 1, 2016. This can be found online at <http://dnr.state.mn.us/buffers/index.html>
- Appointments should be scheduled in advance with SWCD staff to go over your operations information regarding the buffer law.
- 50 foot buffers must be installed on public waters by November 2017.
- 16 1/2 foot buffers on public ditches must be installed by November 2018. (Minnesota Statute 103 E)
- Landowners retain use of the buffer unless enrolled in a program that has restrictions to use.
- Landowners can seed the buffer on their own without cost share and retain ability to use the buffer as long as perennial vegetation is maintained.
- Landowners could adopt other practices to protect water quality if they are the same level of protection as a buffer. They should contact the SWCD to discuss if an alternative fits their situation. The state has issued guidance on alternative practices for SWCDs to consider when working with producers. The SWCD **must** certify that these alternatives will be accepted for the site.
- The Pope Co. Shoreline Ordinance states 50 feet of perennial vegetation or an approved conservation plan from the SWCD to be compliant with the Land Use Ordinance.
- Regulatory entities (County, Watershed District, BWSR) can issue fines to landowners if they do not comply.
- Many small streams, headwaters and ditches aren't public. It will be up to the SWCD's to identify those that need buffers and promote buffering on a voluntary basis on these private systems as we have in the past. This other list of waters can be incorporated into the county water plan for voluntary program implementation.

MINNESOTA AG WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO POPE COUNTY PRODUCERS

The MAWQCP is a voluntary program and opportunity for landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices to improve water quality. Those who implement and maintain approved farm management practices will be certified and in turn obtain regulatory certainty for a period of 10 years. Certified farmers are deemed in compliance with any new water quality rules or laws during the period of certification. Farmers interested in becoming certified also receive priority status for technical and financial assistance for implementation of additional practices.

Pope SWCD staff has been reaching out to producers regarding this new program. Congratulations to these producers for

their work and being good stewards and becoming certified in the program.

For more information on how to become certified in the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program visit www.mda.state.mn.us/awqcp or contact our office to sign up (320) 634-5327.



Craig Bower (MDA), Tom Talle (Landowner and 1st certified Pope SWCD board member in the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program) and Holly Kovarik (Pope SWCD)



Alan and Rebecca Behm and Holly Kovarik (Pope SWCD)



Holly Kovarik (Pope SWCD) Joe & Melanie Cihlar Family Mark, Steve, and Eric Cihlar



Craig Bower (MDA) Stacy, Isaac, Emma and Jeff Hellerman and Holly Kovarik (Pope SWCD)



Grant Pearson (Stearns SWCD), Doug and Don Opdahl and Holly Kovarik (Pope SWCD)



Holly Kovarik (Pope SWCD), Denise and Gregg Stoen, and Grant Pearson (Stearns SWCD)



Grant Pearson (Stearns SWCD), Bob and Carrey Peterson and Holly Kovarik (Pope SWCD)

EROSION CONTROL PROJECTS COMPLETED ON SOUTH SHORE OF MINNEWASKA

Pope SWCD, NRCS, and the West Central Technical Service Area engineering staff all worked to plan, design, and construct 17 projects within this sub watershed to Lake Minnewaska.

These projects were all possible because of funding through the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment as well as additional funding from the Minnewaska Lake Association and the Glacial Lakes Environmental Trust Fund. All of these projects were with individual landowners and cost shared with grant funds at 75% of the total cost.

Pope SWCD staff have been monitoring this tributary the past 3 years and this spring, post construction, has shown improvement in water clarity during storm events.

If you have an interest in addressing a gully or erosion issue please contact the Pope SWCD or NRCS office or call 320-634-5327.

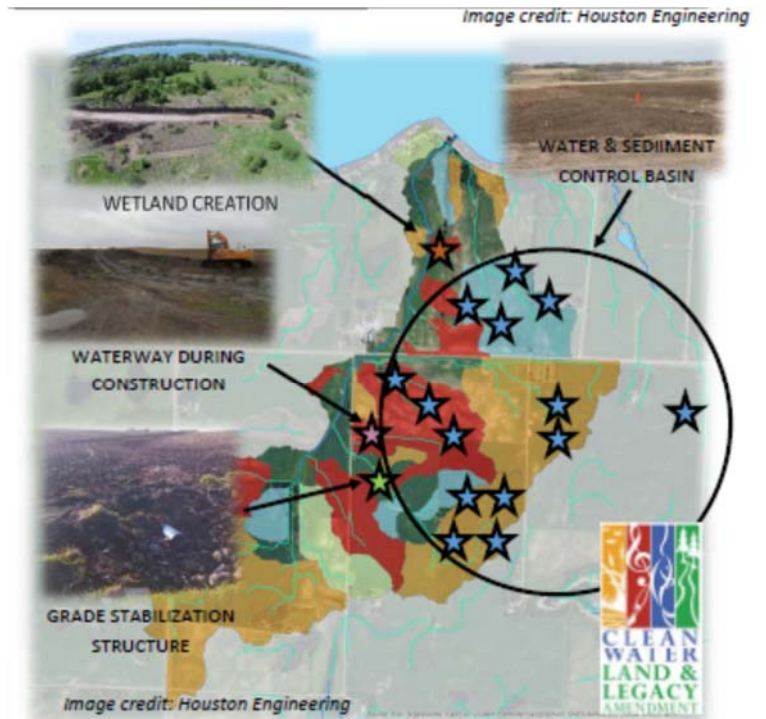


Photo Credits: Pope SWCD

WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT GUIDANCE

Landowner Statement and Contractor Responsibility
For Work in Wetlands or Public Waters

MN Statutes Sections 103G.2212 and 103G.241 stipulate that an agent or another may not:

- 1) drain, excavate, or fill a wetland, wholly or partially; or
- 2) construct, reconstruct, remove, or make any change in any natural course, current, or cross-section of any public water;

unless the agent or employee has obtained a signed statement from the property owner stating that any permit or wetland replacement plan required for the work is not needed; that a permit or replacement plan is not required; AND this statement is mailed to the State Engineer with jurisdiction over the wetland or public water prior to initiating the work (see statute for details on where to send this notification).

This form is a notification of work, application or authorization for any activities described in it.

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name (if any): _____
 (Check all that apply):
 Private Property Public Waters Wetland Other (known _____)

Address or description of project location (attach map if necessary):
 Legal address: _____

County	Gov't ID	Section(s)	Township(s)	Range(s)	Lot, Block, Subd.

Description of proposed work (include sketch and/or attach additional pages if needed):

No-Till Drill Available to Rent



The Pope SWCD offers a complete package of services and products to aid in implementing native grass plantings enrolled in conservation programs and for seeding buffers. Call today to set up a time to meet with staff to discuss your project and provide an estimate. Ask for Kelly!

POPE SWCD HIRES INTERNS FOR CONSERVATION IMPLEMENTATION

Pope Soil and Water Conservation District has hired Mitchell Hartwig and Thomas Sletta for the summer.

Mitchell will be working at the Rosholt Research Farm near Westport, but will also be assisting with other ongoing conservation programs and projects. His work at the farm will provide data on nitrogen in groundwater on coarse textured soils.

Mitchell grew up in the Lester Prairie area in central Minnesota. He attends Minnesota State University in Mankato and will be heading into his senior year this fall majoring in Earth Science and minoring in Geology.

After college Mitchell would like to continue working in a Soil and Water Conservation District. His favorite thing about working in conservation is the ability to work outside and enjoy the weather. This internship will help Mitchell further his knowledge, interests, and will give him the necessary tools to continue to work in the field.

Tom will be helping with the tree and grass planting program, stream monitoring, Rosholt Research Farm, and shoreline restoration projects. He will also be helping with the buffer initiative, along with educational events such as the fair booth and Glacial Hills educational article.

Tom grew up near Hanska Minnesota with an agricultural background. He attends Ridgewater College in Willmar and attained his degree in Agri-Business with a crops emphasis. After college he worked at a soil sampling lab in New Ulm.

Tom would ultimately like to be a Technician for a Soil and Water Conservation District. This summer's position with the Pope SWCD will help him acquire on the job skills to achieve his goal.

SWCDs fill the crucial niche of providing land and water conservation services to owners of private lands. Minnesota has 89 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. For more information on the Pope Soil and Water Conservation District, please call 320-634-5327 or visit our website at www.popeswcd.org.



Left to right: Mitchell Hartwig and Tom Sletta

NITRATE CLINIC OFFERED AT THE POPE CO. FAIR

The Pope SWCD and MDA will offer a free nitrate water-testing clinic at the Pope County Fair Industrial Building, Saturday, July 23rd from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. system is working. Homeowners with just a water softener need to take one sample, either before or after the water passes through the water softener.

Nitrates are the most common contaminants in Minnesota's groundwater, and in some areas of the state a significant number of wells have high nitrate levels. With that in mind, experts recommend that private well owners who get their drinking water from wells should test their water regularly. Samples should be taken no more than 24 hours before the testing and must be kept refrigerated prior to testing. To ensure accurate results, homeowners should mark the container with their name, phone number and a well identification number if more than one well is sampled.

To participate in the testing, homeowners are asked to bring at least one-half cup of water in preferably a clean plastic or clean glass container. To get a good sample, allow the tap to run 5 to 10 minutes before filling the container. Homeowners with distillation units, reverse osmosis, or other nitrate removal systems should take two water samples - one before and one after the treatment process. This will determine if the process usually takes less than five minutes - and results will be given directly to the homeowner. If the nitrate level in a sample is elevated, clinic staff can refer the homeowner to certified labs that will retest the water. For questions about the clinic or how to take a water sample contact Pope County Soil and Water Conservation District, 320-634-5327.

ROSHOLT FIELD DAY AUG. 18



Pope SWCD in partnership with Prairie Lakes Coop, the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture will hold a field day on August 18th. More details will be shared closer to the event. Mark your calendar's to attend.

SHORELINE RESTORATIONS COMPLETED



Pope SWCD staff completed three shoreline restoration projects early this summer. Two of the sites were located on Lake Minnewaska and one was located on Lake Amelia. A total of approximately 6,000 native grasses and flowers were planted to create a natural buffer on these lots from the lake.

Projects were funded through the Department of Natural Resources grant program through the Pope SWCD.

GRAZING WORKSHOP JULY 19

Pope County Natural Resources, Pope SWCD, the Land Stewardship project, and Glacial Ridge Cattlemen's Association, will be hosting a grazing management field day. The field day will consist of a tour of two operating rotational grazing systems where the producers will share information on their projects including fencing, watering systems, utilizing cover crops, and invasive species management.

The tour will focus on beef cattle operations but management practices can be applied to all classes of grazing livestock. Topics covered will include:

- Intensive grazing for pasture production and for rejuvenating native prairie
- Utilizing a pipeline system to provide clean water to grazing livestock
- Utilizing cover crops to assist in removing old pastures, grazing and improving soil health
- Invasive species management to improve pasture and grassland health
- A rainfall simulator demonstration will be presented showing how good stewardship protects our soils.



An evening meal will be provided. Reservations are requested by July 14th to secure a meal. For more information contact the Pope NRCS/SWCD office at 320-634-5327.

NOTES FROM THE FEEDLOT OFFICE

The County Land and Resource Management Office (LRM) has been delegated the feedlot program and works under the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to administer the 7020 Rules through the county land use ordinance. MPCA issues State Disposal System (SDS) and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) facilities. The county handles all non-CAFO permitting and inspecting. LRM works with NRCS/SWCD and other partners to assist producers with expansions, feedlot fixes, manure management and planning for new facilities.

Several decades ago there were over 400 family dairy farms in the county and it is expected that re-registration this summer will find the total number left to be around 20. While numbers have declined there are still progressive livestock operations.

This summer the LRM Office will be working to update our feedlot registration database. While the overall number of feedlots have dropped in recent years, we have had new facilities constructed and compliance work at various sites.

We will re-register the feedlots township by township this summer. Producers will be contacted ahead of visits to discuss status and future plans. If feedlot operators have any questions regarding registration status you can call or email.

If you are planning any changes in your operation in the next few years it is good to plan several years ahead. It can take up to a couple of years at a minimum to attain cost share assistance and to design a project. We are happy to respond to any questions or concerns, and can provide materials in alternative formats if needed. Contact Barry Bouwman for more information at 320-634-7791.

POPE COUNTY FEEDLOT ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Requires reciprocal setbacks between homes and feedlots. When conditional use permits (CUP) are granted for non-ag homes in an Ag zone new reciprocal setbacks are established and we need to be aware of surrounding feedlots and their plans for the future.

A-2 Zone Requirements:

Established to foster agriculture practices including crop farming, pasturing, and feedlots of all types. A CUP is required to exceed 300 animal units with a cap of 2,000 animal units (AU) in the A-2 zone. Reciprocal setbacks are 1,320 feet for the first 300 AU and 2 feet per AU after that.

A-1 Zone Requirements:

All feedlots in this zone need a CUP to expand with a maximum of 200 animal unit capacity. The reciprocal setback from residences to feedlots in A-1 is a 500 foot minimum increasing at a rate of 2 feet per animal unit in excess of 50 AU.

COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

This year it is the goal of the Pope-Swift Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) to focus on invasive noxious weed treatments. Noxious weeds in Pope and Swift counties include, but are not limited to, plumeless thistle, leafy spurge, wild parsnip and spotted knapweed.

Late spring to early summer is a good time to focus on control of new growth weeds. Once the heat of summer is upon us we sometimes see that the opportune moment for chemical control has passed. If this has occurred, the best way to control mature plants is to mow or clip the plants before the seed matures.

Most of the noxious weeds in Minnesota are

biennial plants. Biennial means that the plant has a life cycle of two years. In the first year the plant will grow into a rosette form and in the second year it will bolt and produce seed. Therefore, with this type of plant lifecycle, when the weeds create a rosette in the fall, it opens up a second opportune time to use chemical control.

This spring Pope and Swift Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD's) and their partners have started treatment of plumeless thistle and wild parsnip. In the upcoming weeks, Pope SWCD will work on using a biological control (beetle) to control leafy spurge. Biological controls are a great way to control invasive weeds without the need to use chemicals.

Pope-Swift CWMA will continue to scout for new sites, implement more treatment of invasive noxious weeds, and will continue to assist landowners with any questions or concerns you may have.

Weed of the Week articles can also be found in the local newspaper. Please feel free to contact Jessica Oldakowski, Pope SWCD technician or Barry Bouwman, Pope County Ag Inspector/Feedlot Officer. The contact number for Jessica is (320) 634-5327 ext 114. Barry is located in the Land and Resource Management office within the Pope County Courthouse. He can be reached at the office number, (320) 643-7791.

More information online about these invasive plants visit our Pope-Swift Cooperative Weed Management website: weedwatchers.org

POPE SOIL & WATER



CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1680 Franklin St North
Glenwood, MN 56334

Pope SWCD and USDA prohibits discrimination in all their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

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IMPORTANT DATES

Board Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7am. The public is welcome to join us.

July 18	Board Meeting
August 16	Board Meeting
September 20	Board Meeting
October 18	Board Meeting



SWCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Randy Pederson, Mike Billehus, Tom Talle, D.Gary Reents, and Keith Nygaard



SWCD STAFF

Kelly Erickson (Technician), Holly Kovarik (Manager), Nicole Zimmerman (Farmbill Technician), Jessica Oldakowski (Technician)