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POPE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Conservation News

CRISP AIR, CROP HARVEST AND CONTINUED BUFFER EFFORTS

As you look back at the beginning of this years harvest and ponder at how your combine that was fixed after harvest last year, probably caused you trouble during these first few weeks of this fall's harvest; you may also begin to think about what else your fall will bring. Buffers may have been a hot taboo word of the year and have been set aside much like your combine over the summer. However, just like reviving the bean head from the back of your machine shed, buffers should be reconsidered. Crop harvest is now in full swing and would have been farther along if not for the ample amounts of rain. Despite the wet fall and slow harvest, the buffer deadline remained.

Let's take a step back to remember how we got here. In June of 2015, Minnesota's Governor Mark Dayton signed into law a Buffer and Soil Loss Statute. This buffer law presented itself before with the DNR public water shoreland ordinance in the 1970's and 1980's, which was in turn adopted by local Counties. Ditch law 103E also had previously been requiring one rod when acquired. However, this new law kicked out seeding deadlines. All public waters shown on the DNR public water maps must be seeded by November 1, 2017. Public ditches are to be seeded by November 1, 2018. The watercourses requiring a buffer can be found online at <http://arcgis.dnr.state.mn.us/gis/buffersviewer/>.

A buffer is perennial vegetation placed at the top of the bank for watercourses and at the Normal Water Level or edge of the water for lakes, basins or public water wetlands. If you have questions on how to measure what you need or verify your existing buffer, Pope Soil and Water Conservation District can assist by coming out and site checking and staking - free of charge. Letters and maps were sent out to landowners that our office identified as possibly falling short of the required buffer for further review. This was based on an aerial review. Alternative practices may better suit your parcel. Alternative practices require a request by the landowner and a determination by the local SWCD. This request must happen with a formal waiver. Financial and technical assistance requests are still being accepted. The second waiver for the 8 month extension is no longer valid. Please stop in and discuss your situation with our SWCD office so that we can assist you in reaching compliance. **(Buffer Article continued on Page 2)**

Financial assistance may be available if the buffer has not yet been seeded. The acreage requiring a buffer can be put into an eligible program or a landowner can sign up for buffer cost-share from the state. There was a set amount of money divided out among each county for landowner assistance. This money will be given on a first come first serve basis. The buffer cost-share for Pope County has a flat rate of \$250 per acre and a cost-share rate of 65% on structural practices. A 10 year contract will be held between the landowner/operator and the Pope SWCD. If you are interested in this cost-share please contact Jessica or Holly as soon as possible.

Overall, Pope County is sitting very well with buffer compliance. Even the areas that are still in question have the majority of the buffer in place and typically only need small acreages added to become fully compliant. At the beginning of October, the state of Minnesota was at 94% compliance. Pope County alone is around 96% compliant. Please touch base with the Pope Soil and Water Conservation District in the next several weeks to make sure that you are already or on track to be compliant with the buffer law. Thank you for all that you do as a landowner and/or farmer. Have a bountiful and safe harvest.

2017 OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONIST

Tom and Ann Beuckens of Starbuck are among eight finalists for the state's 2017 Outstanding Conservationist Award, according to a news release from the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Pope Soil & Water Conservation District staff nominated the Beuckenses for the award. The winner will be announced Dec. 5 during the 81st annual MASWCD annual meeting in Bloomington. The award program recognizes farm families, individuals, conservation organizations and other groups for implementing

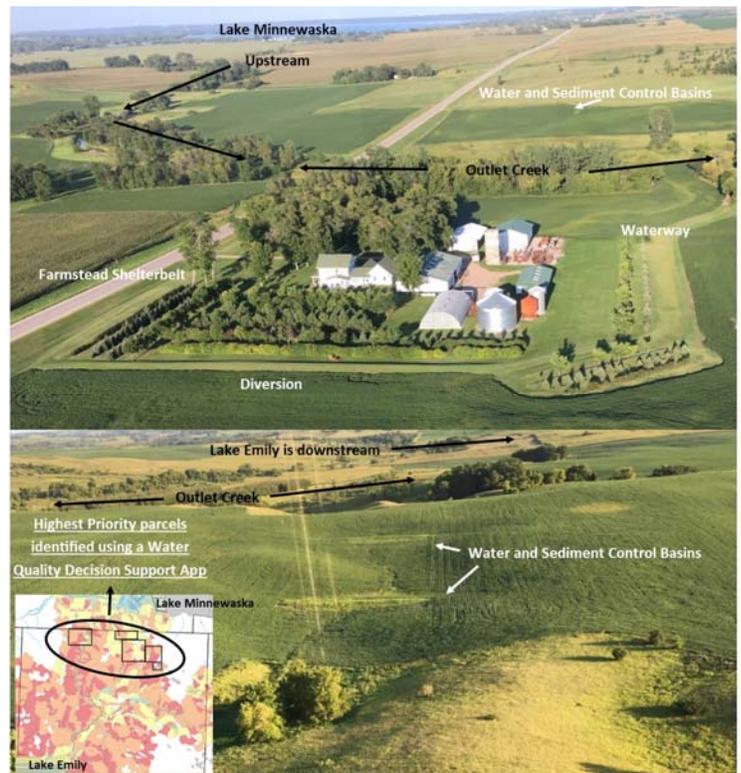


conservation practices and improving Minnesota's natural resources. The Beuckenses operate an 850-acre corn and soybean farm. Over the years, they have planted a shelterbelt, buffer strips, had nine water and sediment control basins installed, grid-sampled the farm for

nutrient management, constructed a diversion and a grassed waterway, and converted 20 open intakes to water-quality inlets. Since 1988 they have had sensitive land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. This year they became a Minnesota Department of Agriculture Water Quality Certified Farm.

The Beuckenses' community involvement has extended to the Chamber of Commerce, Corn Growers, Starbuck Veterans Auxiliary, Pope County Flyers, Gladys Ness Brang Foundation and the Pope County Pheasant Restoration Committee. The program is sponsored by MASWCD, with support from The Farmer magazine.

Article Contributed by: Ann Wessel, BWSR



CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM UPDATE

Our office is busy this time of year with producers coming in to work on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for renewals and for new enrollments. On October 6, 2017 the FSA office was given permission nationally to approve CRP offers for all continuous CRP practices except CP23/23A and CP42. We are working on CRP offers as a first come first serve basis. The national cap is still 24 million acres and we do not know exactly how close they are to meeting that cap. Therefore, we are working hard on getting as many acres into the program as we can.

While the office is a busy place we are also busy in the field and have been out site checking CRP that will be expiring on Sept. 30, 2018. We have over 300 fields that need checking and plan to work on the paperwork through the winter and spring. Many of these fields are in a general CRP practice and we may not be able to re-enroll back into their current practice. We will be working with landowners that may need to upgrade their cover or change practices in order to re-enroll.

If you have interest or questions about CRP please feel free to contact our office of FSA.

CREP

Over the last year, several Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easements have gone through the process in order to have vegetation upgrades and changes. Benefits include the landowner experiencing their RIM land to a greater extent and enhanced wildlife habitat and food sources. An appointment is needed between the landowner and our office to discuss proposed changes and go through an approval process through the local SWCD office to be finalized by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

We concluded our annual site inspections at the end of September. Those whose easements were on our list received their final inspection review letter in the mail. This form is filled out based on the requirements of the RIM operation and management. The main points that we look at is that no structures are built on the easement and that noxious and invasive plants are controlled while keeping up each practice area.



There is now a new Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) sign up. CREP is a combination of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program. Previous CREP sign ups had a general wildlife habitat focus. This CREP sign up requires a minimum of 8 acres for the offer and focuses on buffers and wetland restoration acres for increased water quality enhancement. A waiver form may be filled out for an offer of lesser acres. The land being enrolled must have cropping history and meet FSA's CRP eligibility. Expiring CRP contracts that meet the CREP sign up criteria may be eligible for enrollment. The CRP contract portion will be held by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) for the 15 year lifespan of CRP. Annual payments for the CRP contract will be received. The land will roll over into a straight perpetual RIM contract once the CRP portion is expired. However, the RIM easement is acquired at the time of signing. A one-time payment is received at the time that the permanent easement is purchased. The landowner will still own the land, but the state purchases an easement for the purpose of the land, i.e. buffers, wetland restorations. The land continues to be private, it will not be open to the public. If you are interested in CREP please make an appointment to talk to Jessica or Holly.

FALL CONSTRUCTION

Annual inspections of state cost-share projects have been underway along with 2017 fall construction of new erosion control and water quality projects. Despite the wet season and the late harvest several Water and Sediment Control Basin (WASCOB) projects are being constructed. Many of these are in the Lake Emily and Lake Minnewaska watersheds. There may be funding for a project in your area. Pope SWCD obtains funding through Clean Water Fund Grants. Landowners are responsible for 25% of the project since the grant cost-shares 75% of the overall project cost. If you are interested in preventing gully erosion and increasing water quality stop in and talk with Holly.

Pictured to the right are landowners Tom and Todd Johnshoy of the Lake Emily watershed during construction of their WASCOB.



WELLHEAD PROTECTION

Wellhead protection means protecting the area surrounding public drinking water supply wells, and in turn, protecting drinking water supplies. Groundwater is and will continue to be the source of drinking water for many communities and generations. Protection of this vital resource is important! With expanding population comes development. Which may bring with it more potential sources of contamination such as growing populations may stress the quantity of water available, and intensive agricultural practices may increase the need for more proactive management strategies.

The Safe Drinking Water Act requires every state to develop a wellhead protection program. The Department of Health (DOH) administers the wellhead protection program in Minnesota. This is important to have these regulations implemented because it is not uncommon to find household water wells with well caps that are damaged, loose, or even missing. Information on locations of wells wasn't kept until recently, so no one knows for certain how many improperly abandoned wells and other boreholes exist in the United States, it is safe to say the number is in the millions. These present the dual threat of a direct pathway into aquifers for contamination from the surface and a physical hazard to people and animals.



Pope SWCD is currently taking applications for sealing of abandoned wells within the county. The program will provide 75% cost share not to exceed \$500 per well. We do have a set amount of funding for this program each year and encourage you to contact our office early. If you have an interest in learning more or have questions about protecting our waters please contact Pope Soil and Water Conservation District at 320-634-5327.

YOUTH EDUCATION A SUCCESS WITH WATERFEST AND CONSERVATION DAY



Pope SWCD partnered with Stevens SWCD to coordinate youth education days. Many partners delivered two outstanding conservation events to the 5th and 6th graders of Pope and Stevens counties. Around 300 were in attendance. Throughout the day the kids went to a variety of sessions that taught them about the water cycle, erosion control, invasive species, wetlands, plants and animals, and conservation practices to name a few. Photos courtesy of Pope and Stevens SWCD.



SALES PROGRAM

With CRP re-enrollments accepted in the last month, you may have to update the vegetative cover with a more diverse species mix this fall or next spring. Pope SWCD can assist you with your seed purchase, drill rental or custom seeding. Custom seed mixes can be put together for your specific needs or you can order from pre-determined mixes.

Tis the season for tree sales. If an order is placed before **December 10th, 2017** a 10% discount will be honored on your invoice. Tree availability can sometimes be limited. Please place orders early to guarantee your desired tree selection. (Pope SWCD has the right to substitute or cancel any tree species due to availability). You may schedule a consultation for your site specific tree selection needs with our office. We also have other products to accompany your new trees to assist with their growth. Weed fabric, tree tubes and Plantskydd are a few to help ensure that you can enjoy your trees for years to come. For assistance with the your seedings and plantings, ask for Kelly!

Custom Native Grass Seed

Mixes Available

Call now to visit with Kelly about your grass seeding project.

Don't delay to ensure seed availability for your project.



2018 SALES PROGRAM ORDER FORM

POPE SOIL & WATER



1680 Franklin St North, Glenwood, MN 56334
 PHONE: (320) 634-5327
 FAX: (320) 634-4278
www.popeswcd.org

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State Zip: _____
 Email: _____
 Day Phone: _____
 Home Phone: _____

Order early for the best selection of trees.
 You will be notified in April of pick-up dates for trees, tree products, and for grass seed orders.
 Orders received before December 10th, 2017 for 2018 planting will receive 10% off the tree order.
Special orders available upon request, call now to secure your order! No project to big or small!
 Prices are subject to change.

ITEM	PRICE	#ORDERED	AMOUNT
SHRUBS (All Bare Root) priced per bundle of 25 Trees			
Buffaloberry	\$37.50		
Chokeberry, black	\$37.50		
Hazlenut	\$37.50		
Hi Bush Cranberry	\$37.50		
Juneberry	\$37.50		
Nanking Cherry	\$37.50		
Cotoneaster	\$37.50		
Redosier Dogwood	\$37.50		
Sand Cherry	\$37.50		
Villosa Lilac	\$37.50		
Common Lilac	\$37.50		
LARGE TREES (All Bare Root) priced per bundle of 25 Trees			
Siouxland Cottonwood	\$37.50		
Hackberry	\$37.50		
Bur Oak	\$37.50		
Silver Maple	\$37.50		
Sugar Maple	\$37.50		
American Linden Basswood	\$37.50		
SMALL TREES (All Bare Root) priced per bundle of 25 Trees			
American Plum	\$37.50		
Common Chokecherry	\$37.50		
Red Splendor Crab	\$37.50		
EVERGREENS priced per bundle of 25 Trees			
Black Hills Spruce	\$40.00		
Colorado Blue Spruce	\$40.00		
Ponderosa Pine	\$40.00		
American Arborvitae (White Cedar)	\$40.00		
Red Pine (Norway Pine)	\$40.00		

****Conservation Grade Trees Must Be Ordered in Minimum Quantities of 25 unless otherwise noted.**

Trees Ordered: _____
 Page Total: \$ _____

See Reverse Side for Tax.

2018 SALES PROGRAM ORDER FORM



Last Name: _____

ITEM	PRICE	#ORDERED	AMOUNT
POTTED EVERGREENS (other varieties of evergreens available upon request)			
Black Hills Spruce	\$15.00 each		
TREE CARE (Plant Skydd Repellent)			
Plantskydd (deer/rabbit) Repellent (treats 200-300 1' seedlings) 1 lb powder	\$25.00		
Plantskydd (deer/rabbit) Repellent (treats 400-600 1' seedlings) 2.2 lb powder	\$37.00		
Plantskydd (deer/rabbit) Repellent (treats 100 1' seedlings) 1 liter premixed	\$20.00		
TREE CARE			
Tree Shelters 4' height (biodegradeable)	\$3.00		
Wood Stakes 4' height	\$0.90		
Weed Control Mats 3x3 w/ 4 staples	\$2.50		
Bulk Roll of Weed Fabric 500'	\$150.00		
Staples/1000 per box (Anchor Pins)	\$70.00		
SERVICES -- All Services have a \$75.00 one time service charge			
Custom Installed Weed Fabric (fabric included in price)	\$0.60 per foot		
Custom Tree Planting (\$100 minimum charge)	\$0.60 per tree		
Custom Mowing	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
Custom Cultivation	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
Custom Grass Seeding ATV	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
Custom Grass Seeding No-till Drill	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
EQUIPMENT RENTALS (Delivery charges do apply)			
Tree Planter (minimum charge of \$50.00)	\$50.00 per day		
No-Till Drill (minimum charge of \$75.00)	\$8.00 per acre		
Packer (minimum charge of \$75.00)	\$2.50 per acre		
Rainbarrels	\$65.00 each		
CUSTOM GRASS SEED MIXES (priced per acre)			
<i>Custom mixes available upon request suited to meet program requirements. Call for a quote 320-634-532</i>			
<p>*Planning and Design service with on-site visit. (FREE) *Trees sold are for conservation purposes only. *SWCD cannot guarantee survival rate of trees. *SWCD reserves the right to substitute sizes or cancel species due to availability. *A <u>25% down payment</u> is required on all orders at the time of the order. All orders after March 1st 2018 must be paid in full at the time of the order. All balances due by April 1st, 2018. Orders Cancelled after February 1st, 2018 will be charged a 25% cancellation fee. *10% Off Tree Orders sent in by December 10th, 2017.</p>		<p>Total This Side :</p> <p>Total Front Side :</p> <p>Subtotal :</p> <p>6.875% Sales Tax :</p> <p>Total Order Cost :</p> <p>Paid :</p> <p>Balance :</p>	

Pope SWCD prohibits discrimination in all their programs and activities on the basis of color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, and where applicable (including gender identity and expression), marital 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.

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.

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 1: Crisp Air, Crop Harvest, and Continued Buffer Effort

Page 2: Buffers continued/ 2017 Outstanding Conservationist

Page 3: CRP Update/ CREP Update

Page 4: Fall Construction/Wellhead Protection

Page 5: Youth Education Events/ Sales Program

Page 6: 2018 Sales Program Order Form (Page 1)

Page 7: 2018 Sales Program Order Form (Page 2)

IMPORTANT DATES

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

November 21 Board Meeting

December 19 Board Meeting

January 16 Board Meeting

February 20 Board Meeting



SWCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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



SWCD STAFF

Nicole Brede (Farmbill Technician), Holly Kovarik (Manager), Jessica Hoheisel (Technician), Kelly Erickson (Technician)