

## **2012 PLAN OF WORK AND OPERATIONS**

The purpose of the Annual Plan is to identify resource issues within Pope Soil and Water Conservation District. The Annual Plan outlines specific goals to resolve these resource problems.

The Pope SWCD board and staff will review this plan annually.

The goals and objectives of the Pope Soil & Water Conservation District are defined as:

1. Improve water quality and help reduce water erosion in our lakes, streams, groundwater, ditches, wetlands, and water resources.
2. Expand research opportunities at the Herman Rosholt Research Farm.
3. Reduce point source pollution from feedlots.
4. Promote and provide Irrigation Management Program to landowners and operators.
5. Promote Land Conservation programs.
6. Reduce soil erosion by promoting conservation tillage and increasing the acres under conservation tillage in the county.
7. Continue and expand the District's Conservation Tree Program.
8. Continue to develop native grass program.
9. Implement EEO and civil rights responsibilities resulting in strong working relationships with agencies, units of government, and organizations.
10. Continue to educate the public and students about Conservation efforts in Pope County.
11. Continue to promote better management of urban land and water resources.

## **2012 PLAN OF WORK AND OPERATIONS**

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

Improve water quality and help reduce water erosion in our lakes, streams, groundwater, ditches, wetlands, and water resources

- A. Continue to cooperate with the North Fork Crow River, Chippewa River, and the Sauk River Watershed Districts. *Send/receive meeting minutes and agendas; invite staff to Board meetings; participate in Sauk River Watershed District PRAP meetings.*
- B. Continue as LGU for the 1991 Wetland Conservation Act. *Receive NRGB funding from Pope County; TEP meets a minimum of monthly or as needed; reports submitted to appropriate staff & agencies.*
- C. Assist Water Plan Coordinator with high priority watersheds and buffer strip projects. *Pope SWCD became the local contact for the 2013 Water Plan update. Pope County Land and Resource office had already signed a contract to update the water plan.*
- D. Work with the Pope County Land & Resources Management Department to help protect and educate the public about water resource concerns. *Coordinated training opportunity with DNR, CWRP, and U of M Extension to COLA and Pope County Commissioners for water quality.*
- E. Continue to assist DNR with Groundwater Quality Monitoring. *Pope SWCD staff continues to monitor 23 DNR wells throughout Pope County.*
- F. Install one hundred acres of filter strips. *Pope SWCD installed 350 acres of filter strips; NRCS installed 24 acres grass filter strips in 2012*
- G. Install three water and sediment control structures. *Pope SWCD installed 1 control structure; 2 additional structures were partially installed in 2012. NRCS installed 6 water and sediment basins in 2012 in Pope County.*
- H. Assist in implementing the Pope County 110B Water Plan. *Pope SWCD is currently the local contact for updating the Pope County Water Plan.*
- I. Promote Cost Share practices in news media and at the Pope County Fair. *Completed per objective.*
- J. Pursue funding and technical training to fund projects to improve impaired water(s). *Pope SWCD added one staff person to work directly with the 8 Lake TMDL initiative; staff attended sediment basin design and shoreline restoration training.*
- K. Encourage installation of alternative tile intakes.

- L. Work with municipalities to improve storm water quality management. *Stormwater control structure project completed in the City of Glenwood during 2012. Pope SWCD staff continues discussions with the City to identify funding sources for projects identified in the 1999 City of Glenwood Stormwater Management Plan.*

## **OBJECTIVE 2**

### **Continue with research work at the Herman Rosholt Research Farm.**

- A. Partner with Prairie Lakes Co-op to conduct demonstrations farming techniques using new technology and productive Ag techniques. *The Partnership with Prairie Lakes Co-op continues. MN Department of Agriculture is conducting nitrate testing in partnership with the University of Minnesota.*
- B. Coordinate efforts with Prairie Lakes Cooperative for field day to demonstrate new technology and techniques. *Coordinated field Day, July 30<sup>th</sup> at Rosholt Farm; 110 +/- individuals attended. Cropland Genetics, Mosaic, and Pope SWCD hosted additional field days at Rosholt Farm.*
- C. Coordinate with other entities to utilize the research facilities for education and training. *Ridgewater Technical College, MN Dept. of Ag and U of M hosted field tours at the site. Information from the weather station is posted on [www.popeswcd.org/weatherstation](http://www.popeswcd.org/weatherstation) daily. Landowners can access information for irrigation management and fall nitrogen applications.*

## **OBJECTIVE 3**

### **Reduce point source pollution from feedlots.**

- A. Recommend/Design practices on two feedlots to reduce water pollution. *Completed 1 feedlot project using BWSR Feedlot Program cost share; partnering with NRCS to develop feedlot management plans.*
- B. Provide recommendations to four feedlot operators on guidelines for Nutrient Management. *NRCS completed nutrient management plans on 976 acres in 2012.*
- C. Encourage staff to become Nutrient Management certified. *This service is offered through NRCS, therefore, this is a duplication of efforts.*
- D. Assist Pope County Land and Resource Management and the Pope County Feedlot Officer on feedlot issues. *Pope SWCD staff completed the BWSR NRGB report for the Feedlot program in 2012. The Feedlot officer includes news articles in the Pope SWCD quarterly 'Conservation News' newsletter. Pope SWCD and the Feedlot officer identify potential cost share projects and work together to secure grant funding for implementation.*

## **OBJECTIVE 4**

### **Promote and provide Irrigation Management Program to landowners and operators.**

- A. Secure enrollment of 1,000 acres in the program. *Pope SWCD enrolled 250 acres in irrigation management program; NRCS provided irrigation management for 739 acres.*
- B. Promote the program in 2 articles (newspaper or newsletter). *Hosted Irrigation Management training at Rosholt Farm May 24<sup>th</sup>; program advertised in Conservation News, Pope County Tribune, West Central Irrigation and FAS offices.*
- C. Contact and send program information to all irrigators in Pope County. *Sent poster promoting irrigation management training to West Central Irrigation to send to their customer base.*

## **OBJECTIVE 5**

### **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. *Participated in the Sauk River Watershed PRAP program; working relationship with Land Stewardship and Chippewa river Watershed to host staff directed to work with the Chippewa 10% project. NRCS restored 184 acres of wetland in Pope County in 2012.*
- B. Work with local sportsmen groups to promote wildlife habitat through the CRP programs including program and display for local banquets. *Staff attended Pope County Pheasant Restoration and National Wild Turkey Federation banquets to promote CRP and other conservation programs/practices.*
- C. Distribute a newsletter to Pope County Landowners promoting all the programs available. *Three newsletters included in the Pope County Tribune and Starbuck Times newspapers as inserts. One direct mailing sent to 1900 + individual landowners.*

- D. Publish two news articles regarding programs that are available. *Published articles promoting conservation programs in the 'Conservation News' quarterly newsletter.*
- E. Promote CRP, CCRP programs through Farmbill Conservation Technician position and other programs as available. *Pope SWCD staff assisted landowners with securing 84 CRP contracts, 54 CCRP contracts.*
- F. Promote Living Snow fences, the DOT initiative, and provide technical knowledge to the public. *Five Pope County landowners are enrolled in the Living Snow Fence Initiative.*

### **OBJECTIVE 6**

**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. *Worked with local newspaper journalist to promoted conservation tillage in 1 article; included conservation tillage in 'Conservation News'.*
- B. Write conservation tillage newsletters and articles to be published in our local county-wide newspapers. *Three newsletters included in the Pope County Tribune and Starbuck Times newspapers and inserts. One direct mailing sent to 1900 + individual landowners.*
- C. Assist and Conduct Tillage Workshops as needed. *Sponsored a conservation booth at Land Stewardship Cover crop Day in Morris. NRCS enrolled 142 acres in residue management in 2012*
- D. Conduct Tillage Transect Survey as needed.
- E. Continue to make no till drills available to landowners/renters. *34 landowners used the drill in 2012.*

### **OBJECTIVE 7**

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

- A. Establish two miles of field windbreaks.
- B. Install 5 miles of weed control fabric. *Installed 6 miles of bulk weed fabric.*
- C. Produce two annual publications which promote the District's Conservation Tree Program. *'Conservation News' is sent out quarterly. The Winter and Fall issues include the conservation tree price list, products and services available through Pope SWCD.*
- D. Promote conservation trees at the Pope County Fair. *Annual drawing for 5-\$10.00 certificates for trees or products held at the Pope County Fair in August 2012.*
- E. Continue to sponsor trees for elementary student plantings for Arbor Month observation. *NA-we don't do this any more due to sales/use tax.*
- F. Establish ten farmstead shelterbelts. *Installed 9 farmstead shelterbelts in 2012.*
- G. Establish Wildlife Habitat plantings. *Installed 3 large wildlife habitat plantings in 2012.*
- H. Work with FSA, NRCS, and DNR Forestry to promote plantings.

### **OBJECTIVE 8**

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

- A. Provide a variety of quality certified seed mixes to ensure germination rates. *Purchase seed mixes from a reputable dealer and reviewed seed tags for quality assurance.*
- B. Provide operators with knowledge of how to establish and maintain their own plantings.
- C. Provide operators access to equipment needed. *Rented no-till drills and offered services as requested by landowners.*
- D. Promote Native grass plantings. *Promoted native grass plantings during CRP sign-up.*

### **OBJECTIVE 9**

**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 per guidelines annually. EEO and civil rights statement included in quarterly newsletter and Pope SWCD letterhead.*
- B. Document correction in NRCS civil rights folder. *Documents filed per guidelines in the NRCS civil rights folder.*
- C. Review Memorandum of Understanding including CR, EEO, and Drug Free. *Completed annually.*
- D. Include nondiscriminatory statements on public releases. *Nondiscriminatory statements are included in public releases and office stationary.*

- E. Maintain a civil rights file with NRCS. *File up to date and in NRCS office.*
- F. Review handicap accessibility issues annually. *Office accessibility reviewed annually during FAC meeting.*

### **OBJECTIVE 10**

#### **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. *Task completed per plan.*
- B. Educate students about conservation through educational Conservation Day and Water Festival Day. *Conservation Day held September 27<sup>th</sup> and WaterFest held September 14<sup>th</sup> in coordination with Stevens SWCD. Over 250 students, teachers and volunteers attended each event.*
- C. Educate students about water quality through Nitrates in the Classroom education program with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. *Included in Conservation Day water quality presentation.*
- D. Promote conservation programs through displays at events include Pope County Fair, Area Ag Show, and other events as appropriate. *Displayed conservation posters, SWCD programs and services information and NRCS program information at the Pope County fair in August. Displayed Rosholt Farm results at the Prairie Lakes Coop annual meeting in February.*
- E. Provide educational materials and give presentations to elementary schools for annual poster contest. *Completed per guidelines. Sent two students to Long Lake Conservation Camp for their award winning mural.*
- F. Provide and distribute Soil Stewardship materials to local churches. *Sent area churches information for Stewardship Sunday.*
- G. Select an Outstanding Conservationist for the year. *Steffan and Luann Stadsvold awarded Outstanding Conservationists for 2012. News release included in Conservation News.*
- H. Participate and assist in the planning and organizational efforts of the Area II Envirothon/Jr. Envirothon. *One staff and one Supervisor assisted with the Area II Envirothon/Jr. Envirothon held April 26<sup>th</sup> at Prairie Wood Learning Center, Spicer.*
- I. Promote and conduct Nitrate Testing Clinic(s). *Conducted Nitrate testing at the Pope County Fair, August 4<sup>th</sup>. The HAAK machine will be at the Pope SWCD office for the winter of 2012-2013. Postcards offering free nitrate water testing sent to Pope County Public Health and Glacial Ridge Hospital for distribution.*

### **OBJECTIVE 11**

#### **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. *Maintain rain garden at the Pope County Fair Grounds; assisted with securing cost share funds for pervious pavers at a node in Glenwood. Donated one rain barrel as a door prize to the Minnewaska Lake Association 2012 annual meeting.*
- B. Promote a recycling day as applicable. *NA*
- C. Educate and Promote Lakescaping. *Hosted Lakescaping workshop with U of M Extension March 5<sup>th</sup>. Hosted a watershed training session with partners: DNR, Chippewa River Watershed, U of M Extension April 19<sup>th</sup>.*
- D. Write articles about Best Management Practices for urban areas. *Pope County Tribune article highlighted the City of Glenwood ravine repair project completed in May 2012. Promoted native shoreline restoration in Tribune and Conservation News articles.*
- E. Work with municipalities, townships and lakes to secure funding for water conservation that include stormwater projects. *Submitted 6 grant applications for BWSR funding; secured funding from the Pope County Environmental Trust fund for 1 staff position designated to work with the 8 Lake MTDL project. Pope SWCD staff attended the Minnewaska Lake and ABL Lake Association annual meetings.*