



## POPE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# Conservation News



### Pope SWCD Board

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*Office Assistant*

### DU Contract Biologist

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### Pope SWCD/NRCS Office

1680 Franklin Street N

Glenwood, MN 56334

(320) 634-5327

[www.popeswcd.org](http://www.popeswcd.org)

## CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON SPRING PROJECTS

Pope SWCD and the NRCS office has been working on several projects over the past year that are now in the construction phase this spring. The Pope SWCD has been writing grants to focus efforts where we have been seeing the greatest need for water and sediment control projects. The map below shows the focus area of this funding. The District currently has two Clean Water Fund grants that we are utilizing for the projects and we may need to apply for additional funding this fall because of the need and response from landowners that are wanting to do more.



There are several more projects scheduled for this coming fall and others have been surveyed and are in the design phase. Landowners that have already had a survey done are currently being designed and we will be contacting those landowners early this summer to discuss a preliminary design.

The emphasis for these grant funds is water and sediment control projects. The picture at the top shows the installation of the tile line in one of the basins being installed this spring. There are 15 basins, a grassed waterway, and a grade stabilization structure being installed.



We ask that if you have a potential project for this type of work to contact our office and we will begin with a survey of the site. It takes some time to plan each project and each site is different and in order to continue to do projects we need to continue to secure grant funds. We will need to apply this fall for more funding depending on interest that we receive from landowners.

## BRITTA HASEMAN HIRED AS FARBILL TECHNICIAN



Our new Farm Bill Technician, Britta Haseman, joined us in January of this year. She previously worked as the Pope and Stevens NRCS office assistant where she helped with programs such as EQIP and CSP. Britta grew up in Champlin, Minnesota and completed degrees in Biology and Environmental Studies at the University of Minnesota, Morris. She currently resides in Morris with her husband and two children. On the weekends, Britta likes to attend baseball games, go to her cabin, and spend time with her family and friends. In our office, Britta helps enroll and manage contracts for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM), and Walk in Access (WIA). Feel free to set up an appointment with her if you are interested or need any more information about these programs.

## WALK IN ACCESS PROGRAM SIGN UP

Pope County landowners have an additional way to earn income off their land this spring by enrolling into the Walk In Access Program (WIA). The primary objective of the Walk In Access Program is to provide new hunting opportunities on private lands currently enrolled in conservation programs with quality wildlife habitat, such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM), and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Other natural lands may also be eligible for enrollment if high-quality habitat exists.

In 2014, Minnesota had 20,708 acres enrolled into the Walk In Access Program and Pope County had 10 sites totaling 555 acres. Once enrolled, the land is open to public hunting access during any open hunting season, including spring turkey. The location of areas enrolled will be publicized in an annual book and posted on the DNR website. Bright yellow-green signs will be installed along WIA

boundaries once land is enrolled. WIA land is for hunting only. There is no target practice, trapping, dog training, camping, horseback riding, driving, or fires allowed on the property. Landowners are protected from liability, unlike private leases. Trespassing and hunting violations will be dealt with by DNR Conservation Officers.

Eligible sites must meet the minimum size of 40 acres. Acreage smaller than 40 acres may enroll if the land is contiguous with a Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA), or another WIA resulting in at least 40 contiguous acres open to public hunting. Landowners sign into a one year or multi-year contract, with the ability to cancel the contract at any time without penalty.

Payment rates for signing up with the WIA program include:

- \$10/acre base payment
- \$1/ac. incentive payment if area is more than 140 acres

- \$1/ac. incentive payment if land is located within a half-mile of other public hunting (WMA/WPA)
- \$1/ac. incentive payment for a multi-year agreement.

So if you have land in CRP, RIM, WRP, CREP, or any other conservation program and would be interested in earning extra money off of it please contact Britta Haseman with the Pope SWCD. For more information, you can also visit [www.mndnr.gov/walkin](http://www.mndnr.gov/walkin). Deadline for enrollment is June 1st, 2015.



## GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Across the United States, nearly 3,000 Soil and Water Conservation Districts—almost one in every county—are helping local people to conserve land, water, forests, wildlife and other natural resources. The Pope Soil and Water Conservation District is proud to be a part of this locally-led, voluntary movement, serving as a resource for landowners and farmers of Pope County for more than 66 years.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are local units of government established under state law to carry out natural resource management programs at the local level. SWCDs provide voluntary, incentive driven approaches to landowners for better soil and cleaner water in the State of Minnesota. Private landowners with financial and technical assistance from local SWCDs are implementing a

wide variety of conservation practices including restoring wetlands, planting shelterbelts and buffers, and preventing soil erosion.

Here in our county, Pope Soil and Water Conservation District is engaged in a number of local conservation initiatives, including: water, sediment and erosion control, urban storm water projects, grassed buffer establishment, youth and adult education on conservation, groundwater research under irrigation at the Rosholt Research Farm, and much more.

Born in the wake of the Dust Bowl, SWCDs have been involved in delivering conservation across America for more than 70 years. Because Minnesota has a wide variety of landscapes and conservation needs, each district operates at the

direction of five locally elected board supervisors. This local perspective allows SWCDs to specifically manage the resources and serve the needs of the citizens in their district.

Soil and Water Conservation District staff and supervisors build partnerships with public and private, local, state and federal entities in an effort to develop locally-driven solutions to natural resource concerns. We work with landowners every step of the way from planning to implementation.

Our work results in clean water, healthy wildlife habitat and productive soil. To learn more about what Pope Soil and Water Conservation District is doing and how you can partner in their efforts, [www.popeswcd.org](http://www.popeswcd.org) or call 320-634-5327.

## **BUFFERS—POPE SWCD/COUNTY RESPONSE TO GOVERNOR’S ANNOUNCEMENT**

Conservation buffers are strips of perennial vegetation around rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands that slow water runoff. Adding buffers around waterbodies has shown to reduce soil erosion, sequester excess nutrients, stabilize riparian areas, and enhance water quality. Buffers include contour buffer strips, field borders, grassed filter strips, grassed waterways, living snow fences, riparian buffers, shelterbelts/windbreaks, and wetlands.

Benefits of conservation buffers include:

- Slow water runoff
- Protects and improves water quality by:
  - Removing up to 50% or more nutrients and pesticides in runoff
  - Removing up to 60% or more pathogens in runoff
  - Removing up to 75% or more of sediment in runoff
- Reduce noise and odor
- Serve as a source of food, nesting cover, and shelter for wildlife
- Stabilize stream banks and reduce water temperature in stream
- Reduce downstream flooding
- Reduced risk of tractor rollover due to

set back of steep ditch or creek

Pope SWCD is starting to accelerate voluntary enrollment of buffers with goals of buffering at least 90% of the county’s public waters.

Pope SWCD Supervisors and Pope County Commissioners signed a joint resolution in March to support the accelerate adoption of **voluntary implementation** of buffers on public waters and drainage systems within the County. The Pope SWCD staff will be completing an analysis of areas that will quality for programs and will work with landowners that are interested in signing up into these buffer programs.

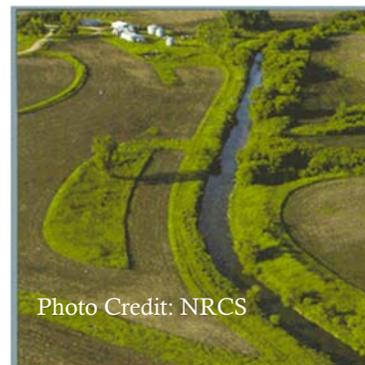
Possible programs that offer cost share and financial assistance include:

Continuous CRP: Landowners can enroll their land into the program for 10-15 years and in return, FSA will provide annual rental payments, possible incentive payments, as well as cost share for practice establishment and management. Enrollment can occur at any time throughout the year. Applicants are automatically

accepted into the program provided the land and producer meets the eligibility requirements.

RIM Buffers: This perpetual easement program is a competitive process and is announced periodically for specific practices. We are expecting to have a RIM Buffer sign up this summer. You can stop into our office if you are interested and we can make sure to notify you when the sign up is open or look for our announcement for enrollment early this summer.

If you are interested in buffering any waters on your property, you can stop into our office for more information on programs and available financial assistance.



## **IRRIGATION WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM OFFERED**

The Pope SWCD has been offering a service to aid landowners in their irrigation water management. Now may be the time to add this service to your operation. This program is designed to give the producer a second opinion on in-field moisture status that can assist the producer on when to irrigate. The decision to irrigate is still the producers. The producer will need to notify the SWCD office of weekly irrigation and rainfall amounts, emergence dates, crops planted, spraying dates, and harvesting dates. The technician from the SWCD will provide:

1. Weekly visits to check soil moisture
2. Furnish weekly computer soil moisture graphs
3. Conduct Irrigation System Uniformity checks (as needed)
4. Provide a year-end summary (graph) showing irrigation totals, rainfall amounts, and potential leaching events (This information will help with DNR Waters Year End Reporting Requirements.)

The fee is \$250 per field per year. This Irrigation Scheduling Program provides you with an additional tool not only to document the water use that is necessary for the crop to gain the best yield but also keeps the water use and conservation of it in mind when it is possible. Contact our office at 320-634-5327 and ask for Kelly.

BUFFERS, IMPAIRED WATERS, & STORMWATER  
*WHAT'S BEING DONE?*

SPONSORED BY POPE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# MEETING & TOUR

**WHEN:** FRIDAY, JUNE 12TH, 2015

**WHERE:** CAPTAINS

23583 North Lake Shore Dr.

Glenwood, MN 56334

**TIME:** 8:30 Check-in, 9-NOON (MEETING),  
NOON-1 (LUNCH), 1-3:30 (TOUR)

**COST:** \$20.00

**MEETING**

*\*\*Register by June 5th\*\**

**TOPICS:** MONITORING, BUFFER INITIATIVE,  
FISHERIES, SHORELINES, AQUATIC INVASIVE  
SPECIES, STORMWATER

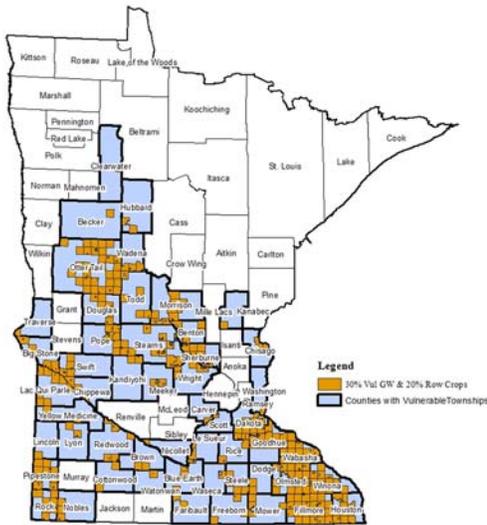
**TOUR TOPICS:** STORMWATER PROJECTS,  
SOUTH SHORE OF LAKE MINNEWASKA,  
WATER AND SEDIMENT CONTROL,  
SHORELINE RESTORATIONS, WETLAND  
RESERVE SITE, CITY OF GLENWOOD,  
STORMWATER MODELING



NAME (S)	#	TOTAL

Please pre-register by sending in your form with payment to: Pope SWCD 1680 Franklin Street North, Glenwood, MN 56334

# DOMESTIC WELL NITRATE TESTING PROGRAM



Pope SWCD will be working with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to test domestic wells in targeted townships as shown on the map to the left. These Townships will include: Leven, Westport, Glenwood, Grove Lake, Bangor, and Lake Johanna.

The quality of drinking water is important for every well owner. Nitrate is one of the most common ground water contaminants found in rural areas. Drinking water with high nitrate concentrations can cause serious health effects in infants and the presence of nitrates may be an indicate of other contaminants in water.

Wells in these townships may be at risk to nitrate contamination due to the type of geology and depth to groundwater. We will be coordinating with homeowners in these targeted townships to offer a free nitrate testing for their wells. They will be sent a letter and testing kit in the next couple of months. The information provided by the testing will help these families and provide valuable information on the presence of nitrates in drinking water. If you have questions please call our office and ask for Holly.

## KASEY WIECHMANN HIRED BY NRCS



Kasey Wiechmann, a 2014 graduate from the University of Minnesota in Morris, joined the NRCS as an administrative assistant in February 2015. She divides her time between the Pope and Stevens County NRCS offices helping to process wetland determinations, keeping conservation program files up to date, and communicating with producers working on additional conservation efforts. Kasey worked with the Stevens SWCD as a conservation intern in the fall of 2014 and worked on promotion to help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species in January this year. She has a degree in environmental studies and was also an intern with the Pomme de Terre River Association last summer. Kasey is interested in conservation, enjoys hiking trails, and likes spending time with friends in the area.

## WELL SEALING COST SHARE AVAILABLE

Pope SWCD has some funding to provide cost-share assistance for well sealing. The SWCD will contract with the property owners to share the cost of priority-abandoned wells. In turn, the property owner must contract with a state-licensed well sealing contractor to perform all necessary work. All work must be done in accordance with the Minnesota Well Code, including the filing of a sealed well record with the Minnesota Department of Health. Upon completion of all of the required work and the submission of the required documents to the SWCD, reimbursement to the property owner will be made.

The Pope SWCD will provide 75% cost-share per well not to exceed a maximum of \$500 per well. The funding is limited therefore not everyone will be funded.

To learn more about this program or to request an application call 320-634-5327 and ask for Holly.



**POPE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
GLENWOOD, MINNESOTA  
BUDGETARY COMPARISON STATEMENT  
BUDGET AND ACTUAL  
GENERAL FUND  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2014**

	Original/ Final Budget	Actual	Variance With Final Budget Positive (Neg)
<b>Revenues</b>			
<b>Intergovernmental</b>			
County	\$ 106,475	\$ 89,518	\$ (16,957)
Local	28,346	24,799	(3,547)
State Grant	373,729	340,486	(33,243)
Total Intergovernmental	<u>\$ 508,550</u>	<u>\$ 454,803</u>	<u>\$ (53,747)</u>
<b>Charges for Services</b>	<u>\$ 90,107</u>	<u>\$ 124,204</u>	<u>\$ 34,097</u>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>			
Investment Earnings	\$ 4,838	\$ 2,742	\$ (2,096)
Other	1,350	10,800	9,450
Total Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 6,188</u>	<u>\$ 13,542</u>	<u>\$ 7,354</u>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<u>\$ 604,845</u>	<u>\$ 592,549</u>	<u>\$ (12,296)</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
<b>District Operations</b>			
Personnel Services	\$ 194,339	\$ 180,566	\$ 13,773
Other Services and Charges	110,663	107,089	3,574
Supplies	3,050	2,189	861
Capital Outlay	2,450	-	2,450
Total District Operations	<u>\$ 310,502</u>	<u>\$ 289,844</u>	<u>\$ 20,658</u>
<b>Project Expenditures</b>			
District	\$ 34,010	\$ 25,281	\$ 8,729
Local	11,071	-	11,071
County	-	10,494	(10,494)
State	268,513	193,036	75,477
Total Project Expenditures	<u>\$ 313,594</u>	<u>\$ 228,811</u>	<u>\$ 84,783</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<u>\$ 624,096</u>	<u>\$ 518,655</u>	<u>\$ 105,441</u>
<b>Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures</b>	<u>\$ (19,251)</u>	<u>\$ 73,894</u>	<u>\$ 93,145</u>
<b>Fund Balance - January 1</b>	<u>\$ 227,973</u>	<u>\$ 227,973</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
<b>Fund Balance - December 31</b>	<u>\$ 208,722</u>	<u>\$ 301,867</u>	<u>\$ 93,145</u>

Pope SWCD coordinated with the City of Glenwood this past winter and submitted an application for grant funding to do a study of the subwatersheds contributing stormwater through the City to Lake Minnewaska. The SWCD has received the grant funds to complete this work.

The project would result in quantifying the water quality of runoff reaching the lake, the rate, and volume. The storm sewer system will be analyzed and project areas will be identified by source and then prioritized for sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen sources reaching Lake Minnewaska.

Pope SWCD is in the process of selecting a private consulting firm to complete the analysis and assessment project. The project will also identify a suite of best management practices solutions that will be prioritized by cost benefit. The types of projects that will be reviewed include water retention basins, rain gardens, berms, grassed waterways, ravine repairs, and non-structural practices such as street sweeping. This science based analysis will position the Pope SWCD and the City of Glenwood to address water quality and help to attain Clean Water Funds in the future to implement projects. The information will be able to be utilized by the city and incorporated into their Stormwater Management Plan.

Pope SWCD is ideally suited to implement projects with private landowners. The majority of the land in these subwatersheds are privately owned. The Pope SWCD responsibility is working in private lands conservation on a voluntary basis. The SWCD provides cost share and technical assistance in getting projects like this completed and this study will help assure in the future that we will be able to secure these competitive grants. The SWCD has had a long standing history of implementing projects in rural areas and sees this as an opportunity to help the City with this long standing water quality and flooding concern.

Once this project is completed the SWCD will use the information to work with private landowners to complete projects. If we are successful in working with these landowners, projects will be implemented in the future to retain stormwater in strategic locations to help with downstream water quality and quantity issues. The success of this effort will depend on the adoption of these best management practices by private landowners. The SWCD believes this is the first step to seeing improvement but recognizes that there will need to be a lot done which will take funding, landowner participation, and time to implement.



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## SHORELINE RESTORATION PROGRAM



**The Pope SWCD has been working on shoreline restoration projects in the County. A grant was awarded in 2015 to conduct additional projects. If you have lakeshore property with erosion concerns please contact our office to set up a site visit. Contact Holly at 320-634-5327 or [holly.kovarik@mn.nacdnet.net](mailto:holly.kovarik@mn.nacdnet.net).**

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# 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.

May 19	SWCD Board Meeting
June 12th	Tour/Event
June 16	SWCD Board Meeting
July 21	SWCD 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), Britta Haseman (Farmbill Technician)*

