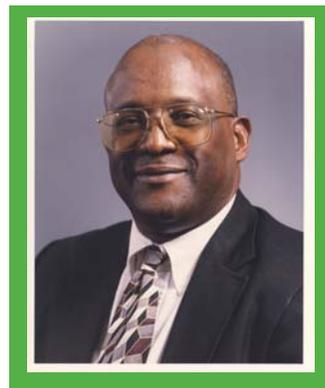


Minnesota NRCS

"Conservation is ethically sound. It is rooted in our love of the land, our respect for the rights of others, our devotion to the rule of law."

~Lyndon Baines Johnson



*WILLIAM HUNT,
STATE CONSERVATIONIST*

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As we draw near to the end of 2006, I am taking this time to personally thank each and every one of you for the extra effort that you exhibited in our conservation accomplishments this past year. I have certainly enjoyed the accomplishments that we did together as the MN NRCS Conservation Partnership Team

Conservation is about cooperation and collaboration with our neighbors, with people from our community, and with people who live with us on the landscapes that we all share and depend upon for our survival. It is about respect for each other and about dignity and equality as we work together toward common natural resources goals

As we move forward into a new year, be on the lookout for ways that we can work even better with our outstanding Minnesota partners. It is amazing what a team of dedicated professionals can accomplish when no one is concerned about who gets credit—we all do! Have a happy holiday season.

William Hunt
State Conservationist

Environmental Quality Incentives Program Allocation made to Whitewater joint Powers Board

On November 6, 2006 USDA Undersecretary Mark Rey participated in a MN NRCS event at the Whitewater State park. He announced the Whitewater Joint Powers board has received an allocation of \$150,000 in allocated EQIP funding for the Whitewater Watershed.

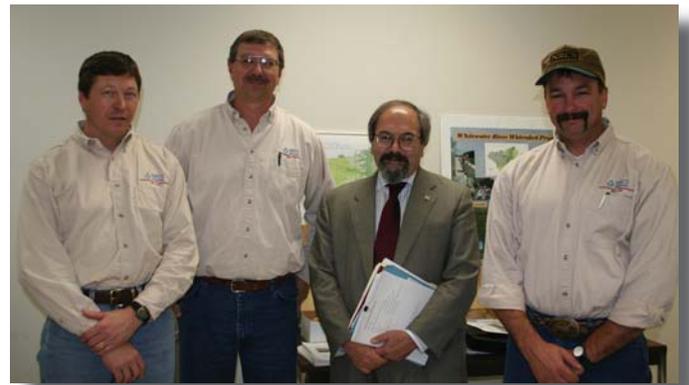
The Whitewater is located within the drift less area of SE Minnesota and includes the counties of Olmsted, Winona, and Wabasha. The Whitewater watershed encompasses 204,940 acres in size. Participation by the local conservation partnership has been excellent. The overall main goal has been to improve water quality by focusing in on watershed upland areas.

The Whitewater watershed has proven to be an effective conservation partnership in SE Minnesota. Since project approval in 1999, a total of 87 land treatment measure contracts have been developed with Whitewater landowners covering over 11,000 acres. The conservation practices have been applied with cost-share funds provided by NRCS through the PL-566 small Watershed program. The allocation of dollars through EQIP program to the Whitewater Joint Powers Board furthers the local-state-federal cooperative conservation effort in SE Minnesota.

For more information about NRCS in Minnesota, please visit our website at:
www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov



L-R LeAnn Buck, MASWCD Executive Director, William Hunt, State Conservationist, Mark Rey, Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment and Rudy Spitzer, Whitewater Joint Powers Chair



L-R Mark Kulig, Dave Copeland; Mark Rey, Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment and Mark Kunz, DC

Almost invariably, conservation farming—which, after all, is common sense farming with scientific methods—begins to show results the very first years it is applied.

Hugh Hammond Bennett

104 years of experience retiring!



L-R Al Giенcke, Lynn Delauriers and Joe Jahnke

Lynn DesLauriers

Lynn has worked for the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for over thirty-six years. He started his career as a student trainee in Soil Science in 1970 and 1971, while earning his degree in Soil Science at North Dakota State University. He started full time with SCS in Rugby, North Dakota (ND) in 1972. He transferred to Minot, ND in 1975 for the Area Resource Soil Scientist position. In 1978 he transferred to Bottineau, ND where he became the soil survey project leader. In 1990 he transferred to Mandan, ND and served as the project leader of the soil surveys in Morton and Sioux counties. Lynn transferred to St. Paul, Minnesota in 1992 where he assumed the position of Assistant State Soil Scientist for manuscripts and interpretations. In 1995, Lynn was reassigned to the Region 10 MLRA Office in St. Paul, Minnesota as a Soil Data Quality Specialist.

After retirement Lynn and his wife Carol plan to move to the Rapid City, South Dakota area. He would like to devote more time to his hobbies of photography, running, bicycling, and camping.

Joe Jahnke

Joe has worked for the SCS and NRCS for over 34 years. Joe was raised on a dairy farm near Somerset, Wisconsin. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point in Forestry with a minor in Soil Science. He attended the University of Minnesota and majored in Business Administration.

Joe worked for the University of Minnesota at the Experiment station in Elk River, Minnesota for 2 years. He began work for the SCS in Yreka, California as a field soil scientist and then moved to Visalia, CA. In Visalia is where he met his wife Linda. They have two daughters that live in Minnesota and one son that lives in California. At Visalia, he worked on the Tulare County soil survey. He then moved back up to Yreka where he completed the Siskiyou County soil survey manuscript and then started and completed the Butte Valley soil survey. He moved to Red Bluff, CA and worked as the Area Resource Soil Scientist and then moved to Davis CA and worked as the State Correlator for California. In 1996 he moved to St. Paul to work as a Soil Data Quality Specialist for Wisconsin and the upper peninsula of Michigan.

Linda and Joe currently live on the family farm near Somerset, WI. His plans during retirement are to work on the farm raising cattle, establishing a vineyard and vegetable gardening. He also enjoys hunting, fishing, traveling, family history research and wine making.

Al Giенcke

Al graduated in 1972 from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point with a degree in water management. He started his federal career with SCS in Fergus Falls in 1972 as a soil scientist trainee, working on the Grant County soil survey. After a winter mapping detail in Las Cruces, New Mexico, he transferred to Sauk Center in 1975 to work on the Stearns County soil survey. During the acceleration of the state wide program with MAES in 1978, Al was selected for project leader of Kandiyohi County. After the completion of the Kandiyohi survey in 1983, Al transferred to Crookston as project leader of the Polk County soil survey. In 1985, he transferred to Brooklyn Center as the Area 4, Area Soil Scientist. In 1988 he transferred to the NRCS state office for the Assistant State Soil Scientist position. In 1995, the NRCS reorganized and Al became a Soil Data Quality Specialist working in the states of Minnesota, Iowa and South Dakota.

Al plans to stay active in soils as a consultant or contractor, while still finding time in retirement to golf, hunt, fish, paint, and travel.

The Glacial Ridge Trail

The Glacial Ridge Trail Scenic Byway Committee has developed a new trail brochure in 2006. This eight page brochure highlights interesting, unique and historical stops along the 250 mile trail and also features state parks, bike trails, The Nature Conservancy areas and trail history.

The committee is also in the process of updating their website with "virtual tours" of the trail. This unique update will be completed by the fall of 2006 through a grant provided by explore Minnesota Tourism. The website can be viewed at www.glacialridgebyway.org

CERTs

The West Central Clean Energy Resource Team (CERTs), of which Prairie Country and WesMin RC&D's are partners, continues to promote and educate the public on alternative and renewable energy and energy conservation initiatives. This past year West Central CERTs sponsored four meetings and a tour to inform the the public about conservation/energy efficiency, biomass, biogas, wind, solar, geothermal and hydrogen energy sources.

CERTs will continue their educational efforts throughout 2007.

For more information about CERTs please contact Prairie Country RC&D at (320)-235-3906 or WesMin RC&D at (320)-763-3191.

RC&D's continue to make things happen in Minnesota!

9th Annual Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference, Ringing in the Profit!

Hiawatha RC&D is playing a major role in the upcoming Midwest Value Added Conference which is scheduled for January 26-27, 2007 at the Treasure Island Resort in Red Wing, Minnesota. For the last 8 years the conference has been held in Eau Claire, WI and has been sponsored by the River Country RC&D out of Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

These two days will be filled with agricultural information, education and networking opportunities for conference participants.

- 35 Breakout Sessions are planned
- Networking Sessions with Focus Groups
- Three Featured Speakers:

Ed Mahoney, Associate Professor, Department of community, Ag, Rec & Res Studies, Michigan State University

Ken Meter, President, Cross Roads Resource Center, Minneapolis, MN

Michael Perry, Author and Humorist, New Alburn, WI

If you are interested in learning more about the Midwest Value Added Conference, please contact Diana Strain at (507)-281-1959, extension 4 or Pam Herdich at (751)-834-9672 or visit the website: www.rivercountryrcd.org/valad.htm

Stearns County Service Center Chili Cook Off

The first annual Stearns County Ag Service Center Chili Cook Off took place on Wednesday November 1st. Employees from NRCS, SWCD, FSA, JPA, RD and Pheasants Forever worked together to concoct one chili recipe each to enter into the contest. The competition started at high noon and cost only \$.50 for a bowl to taste test all six batches of chili plus all the fixings. The chili contained everything from buffalo meat to venison and ranged anywhere from sweet to spicy. An official voting booth was set up behind a curtain and the tallied votes resulted in a tie between FSA and the SWCD. The winners are awarded bragging rights only, and the money collected will be used for the annual Service Center Christmas Party.



WesMin was recently awarded a U.S. Department of Health and Human Service Grant for \$45,462.

The grant is from a "Compassion Capital Targeted Capacity Program". It will be used to help WesMin staff and the Council to build capacity and receive training in order to manage some of the new projects that deal with human resources such as the low income housing project called "Self Help Housing," and Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network for helping mentor new female startup businesses.

CIG Grant – WesMin received one of the largest awards under the Conservation Innovation Grant Program for \$701,022 for the pilot project called "Productive Conservation on Working Lands." The project is statewide and will work with landowners who want to grow new innovative crops, such as crops for energy like hybrid poplars, switchgrass, willows and non conventional crops. Landowners can receive cost share to establish the crops, and marketing and research and assistance. The project is a 2 ½ year project.

Purposes of Public Information

1. Achieve and maintain a high level of participation in voluntary conservation programs.
2. Reach the widest possible audience with information about natural resource conservation and management and the need for resource conservation.
3. Keep the public informed about the natural resource conservation work carried out with public funds and about its effects and benefits.
4. Respond fully to information requests from the public, communications media, organizations, and agencies.

Memorandum of Understanding Signed at the Indian Nations Conservation Alliance Meeting

On Wednesday, December 6, 2006 at the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, Representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the Indian Nations Conservation Alliance annual meeting to facilitate the coordination, planning and implementation of USDA conservation programs on Indian lands.

The MOU is the culmination of a concerted effort to bring about better coordination of USDA conservation programs on Indian lands by identifying the respective federal responsibilities that must be coordinated by the three agencies. It also recognizes the role of American Indians and Indian tribes as landowners, land users, and as sovereign governmental entities with authority and responsibility for the development and administration of natural resource programs on Indian lands.

The BIA, NRCS, and FSA share three common objectives, including consulting with Indian landowners and Indian tribes, promoting the best management practices for Indian lands and managing and conserving natural resources. BIA administers 55.7 million acres of land held in trust by the United States for American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska natives. There are 561 federally recognized tribal governments in the United States. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance for implementing conservation programs on non-federal, private, and tribal lands. FSA helps farmers and ranchers conserve land, air, wildlife, and water resources by providing credit to new or disadvantaged agricultural producers.

For more information go to www.nrcs.usda.gov or www.fsa.usda.gov or visit your nearest USDA Service Center.



Arlen Lancaster, Chief for NRCS



Arlen Lancaster signed the MOU at the Indian Nations Conservation Alliance meeting on December 6, 2006

What Is Outreach? What Isn't Outreach? **By Debra Walchuk, State Outreach Coordinator**

Let's be clear...Outreach is the way we do business with our customers.

The NRCS Outreach Division defines Outreach as a way of conducting business to ensure that the "underserved" individuals and groups throughout the US and its territories are made aware of, understand and have a working knowledge of USDA programs and services. Outreach will ensure that these programs and services are equitable and made accessible to all.

The "underserved" customers are individuals and groups who have not participated in or have received limited benefits from USDA or NRCS programs. Underserved non-farmers include members of religious and ethnic groups, rural communities and urban communities.

NRCS envisions reaching out to the "underserved" communities through partnerships resulting in trust and full participation in all NRCS programs.

Outreach and Civil Rights are not the same thing! Outreach is a process. Civil Rights is a goal. Civil Rights has to do with the statutes that pertain to employment (Title VII) and Program Delivery (Title VI).

Outreach and Program Delivery are not the same thing! Outreach is not a program; it is the communication process whereby all people are made aware of federal programs within and outside of the agency as well as delivering services to all customers and potential customers based on their needs. Program delivery is a statutorily established program (assistance). Program delivery is making sure that our programs are delivered to all customers in an equitable and timely manner.

Management's goal is to ensure a commitment of

equal access to NRCS programs and services by providing equitable service to all customers. The mission of the NRCS Outreach Division is to provide leadership to ensure that all programs and services are made accessible to all NRCS customers, fairly and equitably, with emphasis on reaching the "underserved."

5th Annual Minnesota Association of County Feedlot Officers Conference **By: Michael Hemmann, CET, Waite Park**

The 5th Annual Minnesota Association of County Feedlot Officers (MACFO) Conference was held October 24-26, 2006, in St. Cloud, Minnesota. The conference was attended by 102 people from several federal, state, and county agencies. Michael Hemmann, NRCS Civil Engineering Technician and Becky Schlorf Von Holdt, Stearns County Feedlot Officer gave a presentation at the Kurt Braegelmann dairy farm. The presentation described alternatives considered for the Braegelmann's dairy operation, the Feedlot Evaluation Model (FLEVAL), and the process of working with the NRCS and SWCD office in Stearns County to bring the feedlot and unpermitted earthen basin into compliance. The partnership between NRCS/SWCD and feedlot permitting authorities has evolved over the years into a strong delivery mechanism to get feedlots into compliance and protect and improve natural resources in Stearns County.

The Upper Sioux completes conservation project at the Prairies Edge Casino

The Upper Sioux Community at Granite Falls Minnesota has just completed a large erosion control settling basin for runoff control of the area surrounding the Prairies Edge Casino. The Casino sits on the Minnesota River Bluff near Granite Falls. Runoff from the complex exits down two steep ravines and had caused several large gullies that carried sediment and impaired the water quality for a small stream entering the Minnesota River.

The Tribal Council worked with

the NRCS to develop an EQIP contract to divert the runoff into a settling basin and grade stabilization control structure. \$ 150,000 had been set aside for the project. Dunnick's Construction did the design and engineering for the diversion and structure. Seeding is all that needs to be finished. If you stop to spend some of your money at the casino you just need to make it a point to go to the east parking lot and take a look at the basin.



2006 National FFA Environmental Science and Natural Resources Proficiency Area National Winner By: Pat Gehling, DC, Foley

Amy Robak, a WAE employee at the Foley Field Office and a member of the Foley FFA Chapter was named the national winner of the Environmental Science/ Natural Resources Entrepreneurship/ Placement Proficiency award program at the 79th National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN on October 27, 2006. The award is the culmination of 2 years of in depth work with her placement work that she started as part of her Natural Resources Management class and FFA program at Foley High school.



Amy began her FFA Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) program during her junior year of high school through a work placement opportunity at the Benton SWCD/ NRCS office in Foley. She began by doing a variety of tasks in the office in a non-paid position, but quickly was hired as an intern and began working with most of the programs that were administered through the local office. During this past year, Amy has taken on a manure and nutrient management research project with a number of landowners in Benton County in which she is studying the effectiveness of manure and commercial fertilizer application rates that are being recommended by the University of Minnesota.

Amy is currently a freshman at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls majoring in Conservation with minors in Agronomy and Soil Science. She is active in a number of college organizations and is planning to present her research on her nutrient management project throughout the United States.

Amy believes that all students should have an SAE when they are in high school because it is truly the best real life learning experience you can have and it helps you prepare for your future career.

Pollinators Receiving National Attention

Many of the world's birds, bugs, and beasts are vital to the survival of humans and ecosystems. They are pollinators. And the pollen they gather and pass to plants is part of the natural chain that puts food on our tables, provides food and cover for wildlife, and helps prevent soil erosion and protect water quality.

In 2007, the US postal service is planning on unveiling a clever issue of stamps. This new set of stamps will focus on pollination with eight stamps forming two blocks of four. In one of the blocks, the four plants (prairie or common ironweed, saguaro flower, hummingbird trumpet blossom and purple or chaparral nightshade) are at the center, while a Southern dogface butterfly, lesser long-nosed bat, calliope hummingbird and Morrison's bumble bees are in the corners.

The U.S. Senate has unanimously approved a Resolution to recognize the vital role of pollinators to ecosystem health and agriculture and the value of ongoing public-private partnership efforts to increase awareness and support for protecting pollinators.

The Resolution (S. Res. 580), sponsored by Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), chairman of the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee and approved by the Senate on September 21, 2006 applauds the collaborative efforts of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) and designates **June 24-30, 2007, as National Pollinator Week.**

Pollinators play a vital role in helping produce the food we eat and in maintaining healthy ecosystems. For additional information about pollinators and the role pollinators play in our society, Refer to the **Native Pollinator Plants for Conservation Practices in Minnesota** brochure, or go to websites:

www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/ecs/Invasive%20plants/invasive.html

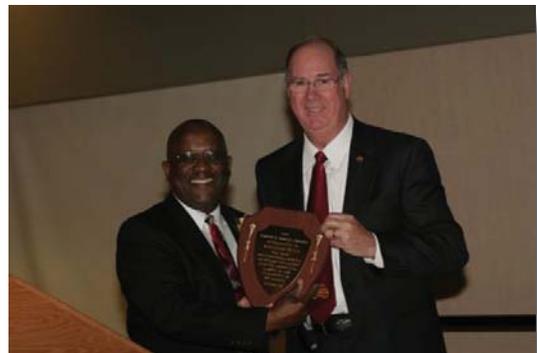
or
www.pollinator.org.

The University of Minnesota, Crookston names William Hunt as a recipient of the 2006 Torch & Shield Award

William Hunt, State Conservationist from Minnesota NRCS has been named as a recipient of the 2006 Torch and Shield Award by the University of Minnesota – Crookston. (UMC) Hunt was one of four recipients to be named with this prestigious honor.

The Torch & Shield Award is the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the UMC. The award was presented to Mr. Hunt on October 25, 2006 at a campus and community ceremony in Crookston, Minnesota. The Torch and Shield Award recognizes individuals who have provided leadership and who have aided in the development of UMC, the Northwest Research and Outreach Center and Extension Service on campus.

“Over the years, the 2006 Torch and Shield Award recipients have put community ahead of personal recognition and have served as exemplary leaders. They are very deserving of this honor-as seen by their dedication, collaboration and unique contributions,” said UMC Chancellor Charles H. Casey.



L-R William Hunt, State Conservationist receives the Torch & Shield Award from UMC Chancellor, Charles H. Casey

Twin Cities Marathon by Bill Lorenzen

This year I completed my 15th marathon when I ran the 2006 Twin Cities Marathon. I began running in 1998 to challenge myself to quit smoking cigarettes. My first 26.2 miler was Grandma's Marathon in Duluth at the age of 53. It was a challenging experience to quit smoking cigarettes and to train for four months, 4 days a week, to build up to the physical and mental endurance to attempt to complete my first marathon. But it was worth it, and remains so today when ever I complete another marathon. I've found marathons to be my own personal challenge and endeavor to achieve and maintain a healthier life style.

Another Twin Cities Marathon Experience by Jewell McKenzie, Hiawatha RC&D Coordinator

For those of you who have completed a marathon or endurance event, you know that the event itself is just a component of a larger process. As 'race day' approaches, focus on the seemingly never-ending weeks of physical preparation gradually shifts to mental preparation and, for me, a psychological rollercoaster. The exhilaration that comes from being 'in the zone' one day can be quickly offset by a bad run, incorrect hydration, or pure fatigue another day.

While I have done other endurance events before, the size of the Twin Cities Marathon (my first, and possibly my last marathon) made it a different experience. The magnitude of the event did not actually hit me until that crisp October 1st morning, when I found myself looking up at two helicopters (broadcasting for the news) from the Metrodome.

Since I started in the back of the pack, I had a chance to ease into the run, making the first ten miles feel like I was floating on air. The rest of the run was dotted with conversations with other runners, combating the occasional side stitch, and taking in the Cities and the colorful energy from the crowd and volunteers. When climbing Summit Avenue, I started feeling those pangs of doubt or the ache of deep muscles I didn't know I had, I pulled out that mental list that I had prepared to distract myself until the St. Paul Cathedral came into view.

Motivations, expectations, and outcomes are all individual; strength and confidence from preparation and experience. For me, the TCM was not about Time. It was about A time, an experience with a lot of others who had also dedicated themselves to this event – runners, volunteers, and spectators alike.

The Twins Cities Marathon (TCM) was held on Sunday, October 1, 2006, starting at 8:00 AM at the HHH Metro Dome in downtown Minneapolis.

The finnish line was in front of the MN State Capitaol in St. Paul.

Of the 10,500 runners registered for the TCM, 8,191 finnished the 26.2 mile course.

Plant Materials Award

Allan Gustafson, Area Resource Conservationist, was the recipient of a Special Service Award for FY-2005 from the Bismarck Plant Materials Program. Allan has been a consistent promoter of the Plant Materials Program throughout his career and annually provides plant materials assistance to the Bismarck PMC, Minnesota NRCS State Office, Area 1 staff, numerous landowners, and others. Two of the largest native seed growers in the state are located in Area 1, and Allan maintains a technical working relationship with each. He is an innovative conservationist and always looking for new technology or changes in the seeding standards and specifications that will result in a better product for the field. Allan enjoys providing guidance and being a mentor to newer employees. He makes sure that the new area employees know about the Bismarck PMC and how they can provide assistance as well as receive assistance through the Plant Materials Program. A sample of Allan's plant materials activities for FY 2005 and in recent times includes the following:

- Allan conducts annual plant materials tours. A tour was held on July 12, 2005 and approximately 40 area staff learned about revegetation on the Snake River Flood Control Project; native seed production at the Carlson Prairie Seed Farm; and which species have performed best on several high salinity seedings.
- Helped coordinate a cover crop trial using a PMC release, 'Aroostook' cereal rye on low residue crops in the Red River Valley of Minnesota and North Dakota.
- Collected vegetative samples of several Indiangrass accessions which were planted in an initial evaluation nursery at the Bismarck PMC.
- Conducted hands-on plant identification training on several occasions with area staff, and provided information on recommended Bismarck PMC releases.
- Provided field data (salinity readings) from 8 saline seedings which will be used

to develop a PMC brochure on salinity tolerances of various species.

- Provided field experience and information to add to the PMC data base regarding species inundation and plant performance on wet sites.
- Coordinated field sessions with PMC and State Office staff to review seeding rate specifications. As a result several changes were made which improved and impacted native seeding practices statewide.
- Provided technical assistance together with Plant Materials Specialist and State Biologist on July 13, 2005 to staff of the Challenger School in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, regarding native landscaping and outdoor classrooms.
- He has participated in all of the Native Plant Summits co-sponsored by the Bismarck PMC, and promoted the attendance of others from Minnesota.

Allan continually challenges plant materials staff and stimulates others with his strong interest in the Plant Materials Program. He recognizes its value to the agency, and markets the Plant Materials Program in his daily activities.



L-R: Glen Kajewski, ASTC-FO, Thief River Falls, AI Gustafson, ARC & Dwight Tober, Bismarck Plant Materials Specialist

**AREA 1
GLEN KAJEWSKI, ASTC(FO),
THIEF RIVER FALLS, MN**

Personnel:

Welcome to Gwen Kappes as she begins her duties as the District Conservationist in the Warren FO. Gwen comes to us from the Clarkfield FO in Area 5.

Justin Carlson was selected and began his duties as the Soil Conservation Technician in the Glacial Ridge PO. Many of you may have crossed paths with Justin during his 6 years as an Area Office WAE. Congratulations Justin.

Eric Anderson, currently working for DU on the Glacial Ridge Project, has been selected for the Wetland Biologist position. Eric will begin his new duties on January 8, 2006. Welcome to NRCS Eric.

A selection has been made for the Hallock FO- Soil Conservation Technician Position. Teena Parker will report to duty on January 21, 2007. Please welcome Teena when she arrives.

Amanda Peterson, Soil Conservation Technician – Ada FO, Nico Bennett, Soil Conservation Technician – Thief River Falls FO, and Shelly Micke, Soil Conservation Technician – Bagley FO, were converted from the FCIP to career conditional appointments.

Congratulations to Danny Weber, District Conservationist – Mahnomen FO, on his recent promotion.

Non- Monetary Awards:

Larry Voltz, District Conservationist – Bemidji FO, received a pen and key chain set for his efforts and activities coordinating the Area 1 Plant Materials Tour.

Leanne Langeberg, Soil Conservation Technician – Red Lake Reservation, received a soft sided briefcase for her efforts and activities coordinating the Area 1 Plant Material Tour.

Joe Van Hulle, Agricultural Engineer – Area Office, was awarded a khaki shirt for his work on designing and overseeing more than 45 CP-23 wetland restorations.

Dan Lindquist, ITS Specialist, and Eric Anderson, Ducks Unlimited (DU) Engineering Technician, received CD clock radios for their assistance during the Area Office Move.

The following Area 1 Office staff received winter jackets for various activities involved with the Area Office move: Justin Carlson, Debbie Rynda, Donna Christianson, Al Gustafson, Matt Baltes, Wes Drake, Joe Van Hulle, Doug Christianson, Rod Heschke, Dave Jones, Roy Holmes, and Linda Fellman.

Thanks to everyone for a great year in 2006!

Eagle Lake Park Shoreline Erosion Project

This project was started in 2003. Eagle Lake Park, located near Frazee Minnesota (Becker County), had a severe shoreline erosion problem jeopardizing the swimming area and the park. The boat ramp was also eroding and had huge holes in the pavement and was becoming unusable.

The owners, City of Frazee, had no funds to correct the problem and were considering closing or selling the Park. It was the only access on Eagle Lake, and a nice place for public recreation. WesMin RC&D worked with the many volunteers and sponsors to develop a bioengineering project that would correct the erosion with cheaper vegetative practices. WesMin worked with the Plant Materials Center in Bismarck to get seeds for the project of various native plants that could be evaluated for erosion control, and also provide donations of other materials and labor. Grants were written, a budget was developed, and the West Central Joint Powers Board (SWCD) in Detroit Lakes helped survey and design the project.

Becker SWCD also provided technical assistance and funding from the state cost share program.

In 2005 the area was shaped, rock placed at the toe of the slope, top soil spread, and native seed planted, erosion blanket staked to the slope, and fencing and steps completed. A recent tour by Plant Materials Center people from North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota showed nice vegetation coming and erosion has been stopped.

In 2006, Phase 2 has been completed. Funds were raised through raffles and donations, partnerships were developed with DNR who donated new concrete planks, and the boat ramp was repaired and planks re-laid so there is now a good ramp in place for fishermen and boaters to use.



Shoreline erosion photo before project in 2003



Shoreline erosion treatment completed, bioengineering used, native grasses and shrubs planted, erosion blanket, rock at toe of slope, fence to keep public off steep bank, and new steps to keep visitors off the bank and allow beach access.

Awards:

Jean Eken received a non-monetary award for completion of a major filing project for the Perham Field Office.

Scott Smith, Eric Soupir, and Jim Gerding received non-monetary awards for creating the Engineering Thunderbook and for providing the training on using the thunderbook to all field staff in Area II.

Cheryl Isder received a non-monetary award for being acting district conservationist in Detroit Lakes.

Personnel:

Steve Linow was selected for the CET position in Elbow Lake.

Melissa Behrens, reassigned to the SCT position in Glenwood.

Robert Koltes, promoted to the Program Specialist position in Fergus Falls.

Julie Reberg, reassigned to the SCT position in Breckenridge.

Ed Musielewicz, reassigned to the DC position in Detroit Lakes.

Russell Plumb, converted to career conditional appointment from the student program to a Soil Scientist in Baxter.

Eric Soupir, promoted to an Ag Engineer in Fergus Falls.

Steve Girard, selected for the CET position in Long Prairie.

Drew Mosburg, selected for the DC position in Elbow Lake.

John Hansel, selected for the DU (WRP) position in Fergus Falls.

Marcus Rock, selected for the DU (WRP) position in Morris.

James Pendroy, promoted as a Soil Conservationist in Perham.

Ivan Reinke, promoted as a SCT in Wadena.

New Staff hired for WesMin RC&D Council – WesMin has hired two new employees to implement the CIG grant project for “Productive Conservation on Working Lands.” John Schmidt, a retired NRCS employee and former RC&D coordinator, has been hired as the Project Manager and Kristina Gerhardt will be the Project Developer. Welcome John and Kristina to the RC&D Team! WesMin is setting up a separate office for them in Alexandria, but they can be reached for now at the WesMin office at 320-763-3191 x5

LARRY NELSON is retiring after 30 years of service with USDA/NRCS in Minnesota. In 1976, Larry started as a Soil Conservationist in Rochester; 1977-1986, he worked in Zumbrota; 1986-1990, Larry worked in Grand Rapids as a District Conservationist. In June of 1990, Larry was selected as the Onanegozie RC&D (Resource Conservation & Development) Council Coordinator housed in Mora serving the seven east central counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs and Pine until his upcoming retirement January 03, 2007.

Because of Larry Nelson's enthusiasm, sense of purpose, and dedication to the concept of bringing leadership to rural Minnesota, the MN Association of RC&D's was pleased to present the "Outstanding Staff Person Award" to him for 2006. Pictured below are MARC&D State President, Jim Hall, and RC&D Coordinator, Larry Nelson.

During his 16 years as Coordinator, Larry has created many partnerships in east central Minnesota and neighboring Wisconsin. He has also gone beyond the local and state level by being on several committees at the national level. Larry's assistance, hard work, and diligence, along with the ability to work with others, have allowed the Onanegozie RC&D Council to achieve their mission: to enhance the quality of life by facilitating the development of local economic and natural resources.

Personnel News

Welcome aboard to our new Soil Conservation Technicians: Candi Fuller, Aitkin FO; Erin Degerstedt, Virginia FO; Bill Hutson, Jr., Milaca FO; Kriste Ericsson, Cambridge FO; and Kyle Asplund, Grand Rapids FO.

Promotion

Congratulations to Donna Walters-Nelson and Marvin Kunkel on their recent promotions. Well deserved, Donna and Marv!

On a personal note...

Congratulations to Ben Ellefson and Mandi on the birth of their daughter Madison (born June 28)!



Lake Henry Fire Department Installs Dry Hydrant by Dennis Fuchs, Stearns SWCD Administrator



The Lake Henry Fire Department (LHFD) installed a dry hydrant on Saturday, November 18, 2006.

A dry hydrant is a non-pressurized pipe system permanently installed in existing lakes, ponds and streams that provides a suction supply of water to a fire department tank truck. In rural areas, a lack of water mains and pressurized fire hydrants can sometimes impair a fire department's ability to do its job quickly and efficiently. The success of a fire department's operation hinges on the distance a truck must travel to fill up and return to the fire. In many cases, these fill-up points are often long distances from the fire and the firefighters are unable to maintain an uninterrupted water source at the scene. The dry hydrant was installed at the intersection of the North Fork of the Crow River and Stearns County Road 19.

The Mid-Minnesota Mississippi River Resource and Conservation Development Council received a Department of Natural Resources Community Firewise Program grant to offset the costs of installing the dry hydrant. Additional support was provided by the following people and organizations: Dale Olmscheid (LHFD volunteer), Eric Kotschevar, and Bob Braun of Voss Plumbing and Heating; Ron Olmscheid trucking; Ron Kern access to property; Kurt Frieler (LHFD volunteer), Lake Henry Imple-

ment; Nick Lieser (LHFD volunteer), Rotochopper; Pat Welle (LHFD volunteer), Welle Custom Cabinets; Jay Hemmesch (LHFD volunteer) J & J Builders Inc.; Bob Schmitt (LHFD volunteer); Joey Pelzer (LHFD volunteer), Lake Henry Body & Auto; Chico Welle, Randy Hemmesch, and Matt Hemmesch, field rock and trailer; Dennis Roos; Dennis Fuchs, Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District (Stearns County SWCD); and Randy Nelson, Prairie Country RC&D.

Bob Schmitt a volunteer with the LHFD said, "The project was a success because of all of the dedicated volunteers and organizations providing extraordinary support." Please give call Dennis Fuchs, Stearns County SWCD administrator at 320-251-7800 extension 132 for more information on the Dry Hydrant program.



Personnel:

Barbara Zeroth, Soil Conservation Technician, Foley started October 15, 2006. Barb previously worked as a Conservation Technician for Mille Lacs SWCD and was also a WAE.

George Montgomery, District Conservationist, Stillwater was selected as the District Conservationist for Elk River. George started his new position November 12, 2006.

Awards:

Non-monetary awards of a 3-1 Layer Winter NRCS Jacket were awarded to the following NRCS employees for their efforts in providing training and designing a structured work experience for the 2006 Student Trainee assigned to them: John Crellin, Ed Musielewicz, Craig Peterson, Steve Sellnow, Stan Wendland, and Michelle Wohlers.

Winnie Chen, Brooklyn Center received a non-monetary award of a Khaki Jean Denim Shirt for providing Wetland Refresher Training to employees in Areas 3, 4, and 7.

Pat Gehling, Foley received a non-monetary award of a 3-1 Layer Winter Jacket for his efforts toward the development of the Mid-Minnesota Mississippi RC&D.

Jaime Schaunaman, Waite Park received a non-monetary award of a Khaki Jean Denim Shirt for her leadership effort as acting DC in Elk River Field Office.

Andy Porupsky, Jordan received a non-monetary award of a Blue Jean Denim Shirt for his leadership efforts at the Waconia Field Office while the DC position was vacant.

Kevin Senander, Brooklyn Center received a non-monetary award of a Khaki Jean Denim Shirt for his efforts in processing 1245's for over 1,200 applications.

Kerry Saxton, Manager, Wright SWCD was selected to receive the 2006 Outstanding District Employee Award for Minnesota. The award was presented to him at the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Convention. Kerry has worked for the Wright SWCD for over 25 years and is very deserving of this award!

Chuck Upoff, Chair, Stearns SWCD was selected to receive the 2006 Outstanding District Supervisor Award for Minnesota. The award was presented to him at the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Convention. Chuck Uphoff has served on the Stearns County SWCD Board since 1999.

Brad Wenz, Soil Conservationist, Stearns SWCD received the distinguished Soil Scientist of the Year Award at the Minnesota Association of Professional Soil Scientists Annual Meeting on December 1, 2006. Brad has worked for the Stearns SWCD since 1980.

**AREA 5
MICHAEL D. APPEL, ASTC(FO)
MARSHALL, MN**

PACKAGES OF ENCOURAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

By Gary Blough

NRCSers in Area 5 have been actively supporting our troops in Iraq by sending donated items through the Packages of Encouragement Campaign. James Smith, Soil Conservation Technician from the Owatonna field office has been a recipient of the packages, along with Lt. Daniel Davis, Sandra Jerzak's brother.

NRCSers in Area 5 will continue to send packages to our troops to support this cause. Lt. Davis should be home from duty by the end of the year.



Area 5 Personnel changes

New Hires

Bart Roepke, SCT, Benson field office
Lloyd Beebe, SCT, Windom field office

Promotions

April Sullivan was promoted to District Conservationist to the Windom Field Office.
Michelle Legatt was promoted to Program Specialist to the Marshall Area Office.
Mark Rose was selected as Wetland Biologist to the Marshall Area Office.



Big Bend Cemetery Streambank Stabilization Project

On November 16 over 80 individuals attended the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, which concluded the \$500,000+ Big Bend Cemetery Stabilization Project (Chippewa County). Ideal fall weather greatly benefited project construction during October and November. Through the project over 900 feet of streambank was protected resulting in approximately 740 gravesites protected from further streambank erosion and improved water quality and recreational opportunities of the Chippewa River. All the partners that assisted in carrying out this successful project, including Prairie Country RC&D, were recognized during the event.

Swift SWCD Water Festival

Approximately 170 fifth and sixth grade students from Benson, Hancock and Kerkhoven-Murodock-Sunburg Schools attended the 2nd Annual Swift SWCD Water Festival held September 29 at the Benson Outdoor Learning Center. Thirteen learning stations provided the students with a hands-on and entertaining look at prairies, forests, water quality, wetlands, recycling and several other topics. The event was sponsored by Swift SWCD, Chippewa River Watershed Project and Prairie Country RC&D and supported by several local donations.

Crow River Watershed Clean-Up

The Third Annual Crow River Clean-Up Day was held on September 16. Over 250 volunteers from 14 communities pitched in to clean up the Crow River and its tributaries. Tons of garbage was removed from the river including tires, appliances, furniture and car parts. Planning for the 2007 River Clean-Up is already underway.

Composters Installed

Five composters for swine mortalities have been installed in Area 6. Biosecurity is the motivation for the composters, which eliminate the need for rendering trucks. The average cost is about \$5,000 per bin.



New Employees

Jodene Negen will serve as Soil Conservation Technician for Nicollet and Sibley County. She began with NRCS as a WAE employee in Olivia until accepting a full time position that began on November 12, 2006.

John Ferrier, Soil Conservation Technician located in the St. James Field Office, began his career with NRCS on November 26, 2006.

**AREA 7
JOHN NICHOLSON, ASTC-(FO)
ROCHESTER, MN**



The Goodhue Field Office utilized EQIP funds to assist a Zumbrota

landowner repair a dam constructed by her father some 30 years ago. The repair which involved replacing a corroded pipe and repairing the emergency spillway will extend the multiple benefits of the site for many years to come. Benefits include the continued stabilization of the steep grade in the valley, flood protection for the properties down stream and wildlife benefits. The wildlife

featured a pair of trumpeter swans that annually nest on the pond. Due to the presence of the



birds SCT Gene Kleven contacted Carroll Henderson of the DNR who works with non-game wildlife to make sure that our work would not bother the birds. As it happened they would often sit on the edge of the cover and watch during the reconstruction of the structure. Work was completed the end of August and recent rains have brought the water level back to normal. The swans have moved on now but we all expect that they will back to the site next year.

Personnel:

Edward Moffett, new DC in Albert Lea reporting to Minneosta from New York. Ed has been a DC in Watertown NY since 1994.

Brian DeVetter new DC in Dodge Center coming to Minnesota from Wisconsin. Brian was a Soil Conservationist in the Alma Field Office.

Area 7 has two new Soil Conservation Technicians. Rebecca Hanson, Rochester Field Office joined Area 7 from the state of Wisconsin. She had worked in the Chippewa Falls Field Office.

Kelly Oliver started in the Faribault Field Office and had previously worked for the Redwood Cottonwood Rivers Control Area.

The next issue of Current Developments is due: March 9, 2007

Send your articles to:

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Your contribution and continued readership of Current Developments is appreciated!

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