



Quarterly News & Updates

May 2024 | Issue 16

Greetings Friends and Neighbors!

The Isanti SWCD is publishing this Quarterly e-Newsletter to:

- Help keep you informed of what is happening locally that affects the health of natural resources in Isanti County;
- Increase your understanding of what the SWCD does and how you can get involved in conservation;
- Keep you informed on how Clean Water Fund tax amendment dollars are being spent locally.

If you have any questions, please give us a call: 763-689-3271

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Follow us on Facebook for more updates!



File by June 4th to Run For SWCD Supervisor

Individuals interested in natural resources and water quality should consider filing by June 4th, 2024 to run for the position of Supervisor of the Isanti Soil and Water Conservation District.

“Supervisors play an important role in how our community deals with a wide variety of resource management issues, including water quality, soil erosion, stormwater management, agricultural conservation, and land protection,” noted Tiffany Determan, Isanti SWCD’s District Manager.

“Serving as a supervisor is a terrific opportunity for people who want a voice in how we manage our environment and place conservation on the land,” she said.



This year, the Isanti SWCD has three Supervisor positions up for election. SWCD candidates will appear on the ballot for the general election, which will take place in November. SWCD Supervisors

serve four-year terms.

To be a candidate for supervisor election, you must:

- File for candidacy with the Isanti County auditor's office from May 21st through June 4th,
- Complete the Minnesota Affidavit of Candidacy and pay a filing fee,
- Live in the district you wish to be elected to.

Nomination districts up for election this year are District 1, District 3, and District 4.

District 1 includes Maple Ridge, Stanchfield, and Dalbo Townships.

District 3 includes Spencer Brook, Wyanett, and Stanford Townships.

District 4 includes Cambridge Township.

Supervisors meet monthly at public board meetings, generally held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month in the morning. Many supervisors also participate in sub-committee meetings or represent the district in regional conservation groups and organizations. The primary responsibilities of Supervisors are to set the district's vision and priorities while supporting the staff's work to achieve goals. The monthly time commitment can be roughly 4 to 12 hours, based on each Supervisor's level of engagement. Supervisors are compensated for time and mileage for approved meetings.

If you would like to learn more, please contact us!

Farmers Come Together at Agriculture Lunch and Learn

In March, the Isanti SWCD hosted its third annual Agriculture Lunch and Learn. Despite taking place during one of the few blizzards this winter, over twenty farmers came together to learn about soil health and local cost-share programs.

Jon Stevens, a local farmer from Rock Creek, gave a wonderful talk about his success and failures on different soil health practices. He has experience farming with variety of tillage systems, cover crops, reducing fertilizer inputs, and was excellent at communicating everything he has learned. Then, we had a few speakers talk about available programs such as the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program, cost-share for wetland restorations, and cost-share opportunities for a variety of non-structural and structural practices.



In late summer, the Isanti SWCD will offer another learning event for farmers through a Soil Health Field Day. Stay tuned for more information!

Cost-Share Available to Seal Abandoned Wells

No matter where you live – whether in town or farther out in the country – you might have one or more wells on your property. These wells could have been used for your home's water before city water was available or for secondary buildings and gardens. When abandoned, these wells can channel pollutants directly into groundwater, posing health risks. That's why the Isanti SWCD is encouraging landowners to look around their property for an abandoned well and, if they find one, to reach out and take advantage of our cost-share program to get it sealed.

The Isanti SWCD will reimburse landowners 60% of the total cost to seal the well. For this opportunity, the well must be located in the Rum River Watershed, which contains all but the southeastern part of



Isanti County. The sealing must be done by a state-licensed contractor, and a contract with the Isanti SWCD must be signed before work begins. The program is first-come, first-served until funds run out. Funding for this program comes from the Rum River Watershed Partnership.

To seal an abandoned well on your property, contact Lydia Godfrey with the Isanti SWCD by emailing Lgodfrey@isantiSWCD.org or calling our office.



Events

Fix Your Eroding Shoreline Webinar

WHEN: Monday, June 3, 6:00pm

WHERE: Online Over Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkf-iuqjloGNCQr1CiiKFADazYfckVkBVe>)

Are you losing valuable shoreline every year? Do you notice parts of your property eroding away? If yes, this free webinar is for you!

The Rum River Watershed Partnership is hosting a webinar on June 3rd to provide strategies for keeping your shoreline intact. Learn from conservation expert Lynn Gallice with the Mille Lacs SWCD about identifying erosion problems and the various steps you can take to solve them. You will walk away with multiple tips for keeping your soil in place on your lake or river property, both along the shore and at common erosion points.

Aquatic Invasive Species Hunt Open House

WHEN: Tuesday, June 18th 10:30am - 1:30pm

WHERE: Cambridge Public Library

This is an open house-style event that is family-friendly! Stop by to search for aquatic invasive species hiding on our boat, win prizes, and see what aquatic invasive species look like. This will take place outdoors in the Cambridge Public Library parking lot on the west side.

Nature Photo Contest

WHEN: July 15th - 31st

Submit photos you have of nature in Isanti County, whether it is wildlife, landscapes, or recreation, to enter our photo contest! Up to two photos per person can enter the contest. Email photos to Lgodfrey@isantiSWCD.org and include a description of where the photo was taken. Three photos will be selected to win a prize!

Buying Lakeshore Property 101 Webinar Recording

Buying Lakeshore Property 101 is a webinar for anyone looking to buy a cabin, lake property, or even new lake residents. Participants learned about the different types of lakes, how to confidently select a lake that suits their needs and tips for lake living. A panel of realtors also provided tips for buying lake homes and cabins. [The webinar recording can be viewed on our YouTube.](#)

Soil Health Field Day

Stay tuned for details of two free soil health field days!

The Isanti SWCD is offering a Soil Health Field Day during the day in late summer or early fall. We are also participating in a Field Day for the Rum River Watershed Partnership that will take place in Pease, MN on the evening of August 6th. Watch our website for updates or contact us to be sent the event details.

Successful SWCD Tree Sale



On Friday, May 3rd, we distributed around 20,000 trees during our tree sale! We always enjoy tree sale day. It is great talking to so many people, connecting with familiar faces, and handing out trees that will be planted in our community. These trees will benefit the community by providing habitat for wildlife, protecting water quality, and preventing soil erosion. Thank you to everyone who bought from our tree sale!

Assistance Available for Erosion Prevention Near the Sunrise River

We can help create a free Conservation Plan to stabilize soil erosion and have funding available to implement projects in the Sunrise River drainage area. Our programs offers up to 75% funding for various projects such as water and sediment control basins, grass waterways, diversions, gully stabilization work, wetland restorations, and incentive payments for soil health-building practices like cover crops and reduced tillage. We aim to reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients that reach the St. Croix River while tackling land concerns for producers. Sediment and nutrients can cause severe water quality issues, habitat degradation, and algal blooms. Erosion also causes problems at the source, including losing valuable topsoil, degraded soil health, and maintenance problems for farmers.



If you own land near the Sunrise River, we offer free technical assistance to create a Conservation Plan to prevent erosion on your property! A staff member will meet you on the site to discuss your goals, identify potential erosion, suggest possible solutions that fit your management, and create a Conservation Plan, all at no cost. Implementing the plan is voluntary and can be funded up to 75%.

Please contact Matthew Remer to get started at matthew.remer@mn.nacdnet.net or 763-689-3271.

Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for ways to volunteer this summer? Below are activities we need more volunteers for! If you are interested in any of the activities, or other ways to get involved, please reach out to Lgodfrey@isantiswcd.org.

Water Level Readers on Blue Lake, Spectacle Lake and Oxford Township Lakes

We need volunteers to take water level readings on Blue Lake, Green Lake, and Spectacle Lake. Volunteers would visit the existing water level reader on the lake and report the data back to us. This is an easy and low time commitment volunteer opportunity that would provide crucial data to the SWCD and DNR.

Weather Observer

Isanti County needs citizen precipitation monitors. We would provide you with a rain gauge and the materials you need to measure precipitation levels. Your weather observations would be reported to the Department of Natural Resources State Climatology Office, which produces weekly precipitation maps for rain and snowfall.

Property Access Permission for Lakes in Oxford Township

We regularly monitor water quality and have recently been working with the DNR to conduct plant surveys on the lakes in Oxford Township. However, the majority of these lakes do not have public access. We are looking for people who will allow us to access the lake through their property. This will allow us to gather data about the health and plant ecosystems. Last year, the DNR survived five

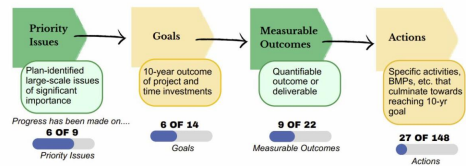
of the lakes and found incredibly rare plants, including one never before found in Minnesota! If we are able to access additional lakes in the area, we will conduct more surveys that have the possibility to provide data that has local, state, and potentially national-level impacts.

2023 Rum River Watershed Partnership Annual Report



The Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) is a joint powers entity formed by 5 counties, 8 SWCDs, and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. The group's purpose is to implement a state-approved Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Any work partners complete using WBIF or other funding sources make progress towards plan goals. This report details all the progress made in 2023, which marks the first year of implementation!

GOAL PROGRESS



WE ARE ON TRACK
 We are 10% into the life of the plan. We would like to see close to 10% of progress being made.
 15% of Action IDs have at least 10% of progress made.
 8.8% of Action IDs are nearly complete.



POLLUTANT REDUCTIONS

PHOSPHORUS	NITROGEN	SEDIMENT	WATER STORAGE
817 lbs/yr 33%	582 lbs/yr	363.5 tons/yr	0.67 acre-feet 1%

Rum River Watershed Annual Report

2023 was the first year of implementation for the Rum River Watershed Partnership! The Rum River Watershed, which includes most of Isanti County, put together a report detailing all of the progress it has made so far.

Highlights from the first year include:

- Preventing 817 pounds of phosphorus from entering waterbodies annually.
- Making progress on six out of nine large-scale priority issues.
- Hiring a Watershed Community Organizer to increase community engagement.

[Read the Annual Report](#)

Story Map Details Progress Made on Green Lake

We have made a lot of progress towards our goal of getting Green Lake off the impaired waterbodies list! 2023 was the third of a 16-year grant program to improve the health of Green Lake. We have made a short storyboard that will take you through the progress made on Green Lake. The first phase focuses on finding projects with a direct impact on the lake and building relationships with landowners.



[View the Story Map](#)

CLEAN.DRAIN. DRY.



CLEAN

- ✓ Boats, trailers, and gear
- ✓ Remove all weeds, mud, and hitchhiking contaminants from axels, wheels, undercarriage, motor, prop, nets, and gear before leaving boat landing



DRAIN

- ✓ Water from boat, bilge, motor, and live well
- ✓ Remove drain plug and open all water draining devices
- ✓ Trash unused bait



DRY

- ✓ Everything at least five days before going to other waters
- ✓ (Or) Decontaminate with high pressure water (120°F or warmer)

STOP INVASIVE SPECIES!

LEARN MORE AT CLEANDRAINDRY.ORG



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!**

Contact Details

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