

2021 Year in Review



WADENA
Soil & Water
Conservation District

Forestry



Tree Sales and Planting

In 2021 we sold over 56,500 conservation grade trees in our annual tree sales with EOT SWCD. We planted 8,600 trees followed by 16,000 linear feet of tree matting —that's about 3 miles!



Forest Stewardship Planning Assistance

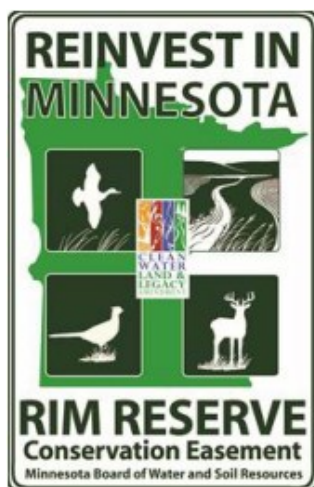
Our office has a certified plan writer to develop forest management plans on privately owned forest land in Wadena, Todd and Otter Tail counties. These 10-year plans help landowners manage their forests for multiple purposes in order to benefit both the landowners goals and the environment. It is a fee based program depending on the amount of acres you wish to have in the plan. This fee includes not only the plan, but also a walk through of your property with our plan writer, answers to your forestry questions and a binder including information on managing your property with best practices tied to your property vision and goals. In 2021, 11 plans were written for 1,911 acres.

Clean Water Fund Forestry Grant

In 2021 we wrapped up this 3-year grant. In total, 51 forest stewardship plans for 7,789 acres were written by the SWCD and private consultants. We also funded 4 tree planting projects consisting of 24,400 trees and shrubs, and spent all \$100,000 dollars of the grant.



Water Quality



Crow Wing River Reinvest in Minnesota

By shielding stretches of the Crow Wing River and its tributaries from development, willing landowners are protecting clean water—including Twin Cities and St. Cloud drinking water supplies. These RIM easements are meant to restore marginal land and protect environmentally sensitive areas to benefit soil and water quality; minimize damage to flood-prone areas; sequester carbon; and benefit native plant, fish and wildlife habitats.

In 2021, we recorded two easements in Wadena county for 349 acres along the Crow Wing River, including our largest easement at 208 acres. As required in the contract, we performed three annual inspections of RIM sites.

Shoreline Program

In 2021, we installed a shoreline restoration on Stocking Lake, which included double-stacked coir logs and a hillside planting of native grasses and flowers. With the help of a Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa crew, we spent three days installing 28 coir logs with 168 wooden stakes and planting 0.5 pounds of native woodland seed mix and 324 plant plugs. Between EOT and Wadena counties, **these projects saved 16,800 lbs/year of sediment, 1,860 lbs/year of soil, and 9.6 lbs/year of phosphorus from entering our lakes!** Talk about doing your part to improve water quality! Great work guys!



Redeye River One Watershed, One Plan

The Redeye River 1W1P is now in implementation stage! Planning documents were signed by officials from the EOT SWCD, Otter Tail County, Wadena SWCD and Wadena County, Becker SWCD, and Todd SWCD. Since receiving funding, we've encumbered and/or spent \$46,607 on projects directly benefitting Redeye River water quality.

Have a project in mind?

Do you have a conservation project you would like to do on your land? Keep an eye out for funding opportunities coming your way! Our focus on the Redeye River watershed means we may be able to provide assistance and/or cost share. If you have forest land, pasture/grassland, or crop land in the watershed and you want to implement a conservation practice, let us know!

Some projects we have funded include manure pits, rotational grazing systems, shoreline restorations, and tree plantings, to name just a few.

Agriculture

Cover Crop Grant

In 2021 we continued our work on a cover crop grant, working with 21 producers in EOT and Wadena counties, seeding over 1,512 acres of cover crops using a variety of seeding methods. Two producers planted cover crops in June, seven in August, and 12 in September. Overall, it was a tough year for cover crops due to little rain. Producers who were able to utilize irrigation did well, but some of the earlier planted cover crops stayed dormant until it started to rain in August.

We had three cover crop plots again this year in Perham, Parkers Prairie, and Staples. Each had cover crops interseeded into corn with four different mixes, two different planting times, and two different methods of seeding.



Irrigation Scheduling Program

2021 was a tough year for farmers. Things started off looking optimistic, with crops getting in the ground timely. Then a hard frost hit in May, hitting some producers and sparing others. We got a minimal amount of rain all the way through mid-August, leaving the area in a severe drought.

Irrigation was relied on heavily this summer in order to produce a crop.

We had 80 fields for 35 farmers in the three county area enrolled in the program. All rain gauges were pulled around September 2, 2021 for a total of 15 weeks of irrigation scheduling. Here's to hoping we don't need quite so much irrigation in 2022!



Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program

Brett Dailey, Wadena SWCD Board Member, was water quality certified in 2021. Brett has a 35 cow-calf beef operation and farms 439 acres north of Wadena. He uses rotational grazing to improve soil, plant, and animal health, and keeps the majority of his farm under perennial cover. Through Brett's efforts, water quality is protected and soil erosion is minimized. Thanks for your dedication to protecting our natural resources!



Other Programs



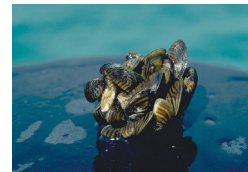
Feedlots We are going to have our bi-annual Producer Meeting, with guest speakers again on March 17, 2022 at CLC in Staples in conjunction with Todd SWCD. We completed our required 7% of inspections which is 6. We got 51 sites re-registered. As a reminder, every feedlot in Wadena County is required to register to be compliant with MPCA rules. Registration forms, as well manure test kits, are always available in the Wadena SWCD office. Stop by or call with any feedlot questions!



Wetlands Conservation Act (WCA)

WCA was passed into law in 1991, with the purpose of protecting and restoring wetlands in the state. In Wadena, we're here to help you navigate the law in order to protect the functions of wetlands in the county.

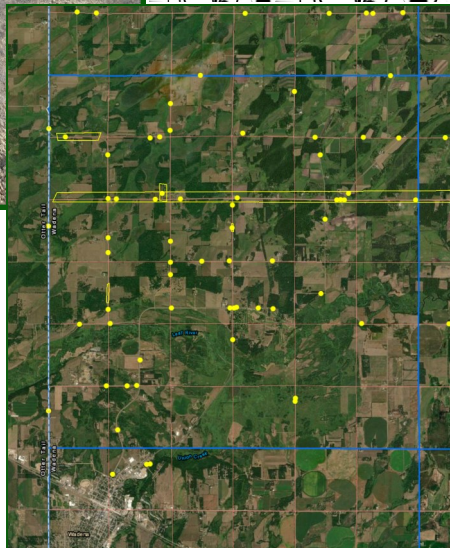
In 2021, staff helped with 63 wetland projects in the county last year. If you have questions about if your project will impact a wetland, contact our office.



STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!

Aquatic Invasive Species

Inspectors were at local county lake accesses during the open water season to conduct inspections of boats entering and leaving the lakes to help stop the spread of invasive species. Removing plants and vegetation is needed to ensure that invasives are not transported to other waters in the state. In 2021, 675 inspections were performed between 4 public accesses.



County Aq Inspector

Using the MDA Noxious Weed Grant we received, we started to conduct surveys in nine townships of the county. The locations of infestations were mapped (picture on left) and will be used to for best management plans to control those noxious weeds. The main weeds we found were spotted knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Canada Thistles, and Plumeless Thistles. We have three townships left until the mapping is complete. Then we can start on an action plan for the higher infested areas.

"Helping People Help the Land"



Before (right) and after (above, before seeding) of a stream crossing installed to decrease erosion from livestock.



Soil Conservation Technician Ivan Reinke (left), and District Conservationist Joshua Hanson



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP is designed to assist farmers and ranchers with installation of conservation fixes on their land; working to stop wind and water erosion and provide needed habitat improvements vital for soil and water conservation on the landscape.

8 New Contracts were enrolled in 2021 treating **676 acres** and 1 RCPP contract treating **446 acres**.

Some of the practices installed last season include; CAP Nutrient Management Plan, Precision Nutrient Management, Prescribed Grazing Management and Infrastructure, Grass and Forb Plantings for Honey Bees and Pollinators, Cover Crops, and a High Tunnel.

New RCPP Grant Opportunity for Irrigation Practices

The Wadena SWCD is part of a partnership that has received \$3.5 million of federal funds to work directly with producers using irrigation to implement conservation practices that protect groundwater quantity and quality. This funding will support the adoption of new technologies and practices to improve irrigation water use efficiency. Contact our office to learn more.



The signing ceremony with (L to R) Leanne Buck (MASWCD), Keith Olander (CLC Dean of Ag Studies), Troy Daniels (NRCS State Conservationist), Thom Peterson (Commissioner of Ag) & Darren Newville (EOT SWCD).

Our Staff:

District Manager: Darren Newville

District Technician: Mitchell Janson

Asst Mgr, Forestry and Water Resource Tech: Anne Oldakowski

Administrative Secretary: Chantal Tougas

Water Planner/Watershed Coordinator: vacant



Wadena and East Otter Tail SWCD Staff

Back row, left to right: Mitchell Janson, Chantal Tougas, Anne Oldakowski, Liz Wiese, Aimee Duchene, Darren Newville

Front row, left to right: Kristi Rorah, Jim Lahn, Nathan Wiese, Tanner Schmitz, Trisha Demarais, Ben Underhill, Hayley Courneya (2021 intern)

Wadena SWCD Supervisors:

Chairman: Ken Berg

Vice Chairman: Bruce Juntunen

Public Relations: Brett Dailey

Secretary: Nancy Benson

Treasurer: Tom Schultz

Wadena SWCD Board Meetings are open to the public and held every 3rd Monday of the month at 7:30am. Check out our website for more information.

Our Mission

The Wadena Soil and Water Conservation District seeks to achieve and maintain the highest quality and quantity of natural resources possible through wise stewardship for now and the future within the limits of human and financial means available.



Wadena SWCD

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