

2015 Annual Report

Nobles Soil and Water Conservation District

Mission Statement

“Protecting our Soil and Water Resources and Promoting their Wise Use”



Introduction

The Nobles Soil and Water Conservation District was organized in 1954 as a legal subdivision of the state operating under a charter insured by the Secretary of State. The District is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors who is responsible for directing all District activities and establishing operational policies. Each supervisor is elected for a 4-year term. Each supervisor lives in a different geographic area of the District and represents that portion of the District. By utilizing a combination of available local, state and federal assistance, the District directs conservation programs to service the resource management needs of all those who live within Nobles County.

The District cooperates with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation District under a Memorandum of Understanding whereby full-time technical assistance on soil survey, engineering, agronomy, biology, woodland conservation and administration is furnished to the District by the Natural Resources conservation District’s field, area and state office staff. The Nobles SWCD share the Agriculture Service Center at 1567 McMillan St., Worthington Minnesota, with several USDA agencies.

District Supervisors

Rick Nelsen	Chairman	Seward, Graham Lakes, Elk and Hersey Townships
Lynn Darling	Vice-Chairman	Bloom, Summit Lake, Dewald and Worthington Townships
Ken Wolf	Secretary	Westside, Olney, Grand Prairie and Little Rock Townships
Jim Knips	Treasurer	Leota, Wilmont, Lismore and Larkin Townships
Paul Langseth	PR&I	Lorain, Ransom, Bigelow, and Indian Lake Townships

District Staff

Ed Lenz.....District Manager	Emmie Peters.....District Technician
John Shea.....District Technician/District Manager	Chessa Frahm.....MOB Watershed Coordinator
Kevin Roth.....Farmbill Technician	Sabrina Raddle.....Accountant/ Admin Assistant
Austin DeWitte.....Farmbill Technician	Ross Behrends.....MOB Watershed Coordinator

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Stephanie McLain.....District Conservationist	Karen Boysen.....Soil Conservationist
Brad Harberts.....Civil Engineer	Teresa Dickey.....Office Clerk

Nobles SWCD Board Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 a.m.

2015 Nobles SWCD Programs Report

Tree Program



The Nobles SWCD offered for sale different tree and shrubs species native to Minnesota. Producers purchased the trees to plant into windbreaks, urban and rural conservation, and wildlife food and habitat. Through the annual tree program the Nobles SWCD is able to promote conservation practices and the value of forestry resources in preventing soil loss and improving water quality. The District sold over 12,670 trees, in 2015, and assisted 23 landowners with tree planting. More than 686 tree mats were sold and over 17,550 feet of mating was installed in 2015.

State Cost-Share



The State Cost-Share program is a viable source of funds that provides financial incentives to landowners that wish to install conservation practices on their land. In addition to the State Cost-Share program, landowners were given an opportunity to participate in various other cost-share or financial incentive programs, such as the Federal EQIP program and the State Revolving Loan Program. The SWCD and NRCS provide technical assistance for the survey design and installation of water quality practices. The SWCD received \$17,383.00 for FY 2015 allocations.

Environmental Education



Environmental education is an important part of our SWCD office. Classes and materials are offered to schools and churches across Nobles County.

2015 Activities Included

- Second Grade Arbor Day Presentations
- Fifth Grade Adrian Environmental Learning Area Tours
- Fifth Grade Prairie Wetlands Environmental Learning Area
- Ecology Bus presentations
- Fifth and Sixth Grade Environmental Fair – Slayton, MN

Wetland Conservation Act Program



The Nobles SWCD assists cities, townships, citizens, and County departments in the administration of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act. Nobles SWCD staff provides technical and administrative assistance for wetland related activities throughout Nobles County. Common activities involved with the program include tile and drainage applications as well as wetland banking. The Nobles SWCD has continued its commitment to ensure that staff is adequately trained and updated on current wetland rules and policy. In 2015, Nobles SWCD worked on over 500 landowner drainage requests.

State Revolving Loan Program



During 2015, the Nobles SWCD in conjunction with the Nobles Co. Commissioners, Southwest State Bank Worthington, United Prairie, Fulda Credit Union and MinnWest Bank worked with local landowners to obtain MN Department of Agriculture AgBMP Loans. During 2015 over \$408,138 worth of loans were dispersed related to conservation tillage, ISTS, and Ag waste management.

Flood Relief Grant



Nobles County was hit with a large rain event in the summer of 2014. Flood Relief funds of over \$600,000 were granted to Nobles SWCD in two phases. The funds are designed to help repair existing BMP's, establish new BMP's to and prevent sediment pollution in the future. In 2015, the Nobles SWCD signed 11 contracts and completed 3.

Water Monitoring Program



The Nobles SWCD is participating in the Pollution Control Agency's Major Watershed Approach. For the past four years, Nobles SWCD has housed a watershed coordinator for the Missouri River Basin. Work continued this year towards completing the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies document and supporting reports. The Assessment Report can be viewed on the Minnesota PCA website.

Clean Water Assistance Funds



The Nobles SWCD applied for and received grants from the Clean Water Assistance Funds for over the past 6 years. In 2014, the Nobles SWCD received funding for a Feedlot accelerated Implementation grant to complete level III inventories for feedlots in the Rock River Watershed. The work for this grant will be completed in 2016.

Clean Water Feedlot Funds



The Nobles SWCD partnered with the Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area and other private engineers to evaluate and prepare designs to repair two feedlots within Nobles County. The first feedlot project is within 600' of Kanaranzi Creek. The second feedlot is located within 300' from neighboring property and within 850' of a Rock River tributary. Both projects received Clean Water Funds to reduce pollution runoff.

Watershed Boards and Staff

Heron Lake Watershed District Board

Dale Bartosh
Jim Buschena
Gary Ewert
Roger Hartman
Bruce Leinen

Jan Voit, HLWD Administration
Catherine Sereg, HLWD Technician
Amanda Schultz, HLWD Coordinator
Erin Nordquist, HLWD Coordinator

Kanaranzi-Little Rock Watershed District

Jerry Brake
Connie Frahm
Coleen Gruis
Layton Gruis
Tim Taylor

John Shea, Exec. Secretary

K-LR Watershed Project-Joint Powers Board

Lynn Darling
Coleen Gruis
Don Reker
Connie Frahm
Gene Metz

Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District

Casey Ingenthron
Lester Johnson
Rolf Mahlberg
Jay Milbrandt
Jeff Rogers

Dan Livdahl, Administrator