

2012 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

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

District Staff

Ed Lenz.....District Manager
John Shea.....District Technician

Jane Steffl....Financial/Contracting Officer
Chessa Frahm.....MOB Watershed Coord.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Stephanie McLain....District Conservationist
Brad Harberts.....Civil Engineer

Dawn Madison.....Soil Conservation Tech.
Barb Daly.....Adminstrative Asst.

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

2012 Nobles SWCD Programs Report

Tree Program



The NSWCD 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 NSWCD is able to promote conservation practices and the value of forestry resources in preventing soil loss and improving water quality. The District sold over 15,500 trees, in 2012, and assisted 20 landowners with tree planting. Over 11,000 feet of mating was also installed in 2012.

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 \$22,598.00 for FY 2012 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. 2012 activities included:

- Prairie Elementary Earth Day Presentations
- Fifth Grade Adrian Environmental Learning Area Tours
- Fifth Grade Prairie Wetlands Environmental Learning Area Tours
- Ecology Bus presentations
- Envirothon Area 5, Worthington teams participated at State level
- Fifth and Sixth Grade Environmental Fair – Slayton, MN
- High School FFA Speech Contest judging

Wetland Conservation Act Program



The NSWCD assists cities, townships, citizens, and County departments in the administration of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act. NSWCD 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 NSWCD has continued its commitment to ensure that staff is adequately trained and updated on current wetland rules and policy. In 2012, NSWCD worked on over 600 landowner drainage requests.



State Revolving Loan Program

During 2012 the NSWCD 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 2012 over \$740,000 worth of loans were dispersed related to conservation tillage, ISTS, and ag waste management. That total was an increase of \$333,000 over 2011 totals.

Federal ARRA (stimulus) Funds



The NSWCD provided Administrative and Technical assistance to implement over \$300,000 worth of federal Cost share funds designated for use in the Kanaranzi Little Rock Watershed District. Well over 20 projects were contracted and only six are left for completion in 2013

Water Monitoring Program



The Nobles SWCD was awarded a Stream Water Assessment Grant to monitor the Little Rock River, Little Rock Creek, Ocheyedan River and the Kanaranzi Creek. The Nobles SWCD also continued work related to monitoring Indian Lake for possible impairments. Several waters in Nobles County have been identified as being impaired by MPCA

Clean Water Assistance Funds



The Nobles SWCD applied for and received funding from the Clean Water Funding over the past 4 years to install erosion control practices 55 waterways and sediment basins were installed in 2012. Completion of a Shore land improvement grant utilizing Clean water assistance funds secured the stabilization of 1600 feet of Lake Ocheda Shoreline.

Clean Water Feedlot Funds



The Nobles SWCD in partnership with the Southwest Prairie TSA Engineers completed a feedlot improvement project on the Kanaranzi Creek. Outdoor lots were moved from the stream and buffers were installed to protect the Stream Tributary. An additional component to the project was the closure of a non-compliant manure storage basin. A large portion of the project was the creation of a manure storage facility that protects feedlot runoff from the Stream. The Feedlot Grant received was \$241,308.00.



Nobles Soil and Water Conservation District

2009-2012 Program Summary

- **Program Highlights**
 - 28 Grassed Waterways
 - 232 Terrace and Sediment Basins Constructed
 - 4 Clean Water Diversions
 - 52.7 Acres of Farmstead Windbreaks Installed
 - 13.3 Acres of Private Wildlife Plantings
 - 1131.7 acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) new and extensions.
 - 2,400 feet of stream bank restoration.
 - Over 2100 Drainage Requests filed for wetland compliance.
 - 39 feedlots received technical assistance

- **Project Funds Utilized (including federal funds and landowner contribution)**
 - 3,091,000 in Federal EQIP Funds for erosion practices and feedlot improvements
 - 1,385,000 in Federal Conservation Stewardship Payments to Local Operators
 - 1,889,000 in State Low Interest Loans for Feedlot improvements, reduced tillage equipment, manure management equipment and SSTS replacement.
 - 1,348,000 in State Clean Water Funding for erosion practices and feedlots.
 - 461,000 in Federal Stimulus Funds for erosion Control Practices.
 - 200,000 in State Cost –share and Flood Reduction Funds

\$8,374,000 in Local Project Funds on Nobles County in Four years.

Watershed Boards and Staff

Heron Lake Watershed District Board

Dale Bartosh
Jim Buschena
Gary Ewert
Roger Hartman
Mike McCarvel

Jan Voit, HLWD Admin.
Ross Behrends, HLWD Tech

Kanaranzi-Little Rock Watershed District

Jerry Brake
Connie Frahm
Coleen Gruis
Layton Gruis
Tim Taylor

Bruce Heitkamp, Exec. Secretary

K-LR Watershed Project-Joint Powers Board

Lynn Darling
Coleen Gruis
Don Reker
Connie Frahm
Gene Metz

Jane Steffl, Contracting Officer

Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District

Casey Ingenthron
Lester Johnson
Rolf Mahlberg
Jay Milbrandt
Jeff Rogers

Dan Livdahl, Administrator