



JUNE 2023

# WRIGHT SWCD NEWS

Summer Newsletter of Wright Soil & Water Conservation District

## AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES INSPECTORS FOR 2023

Meet our 2023 AIS Inspectors! AIS inspectors will be staffing public launches throughout the county May through September. Their goal is to inspect water related equipment for plants, animals, mud, and water.

This job helps protect Wright County and other Minnesota Lakes from aquatic invasive species like Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra mussels, and starry stonewort. They are working under Wright SWCD delegated authority to enforce Minnesota state statute.

All boaters are required to comply with their instructions including submitting to a visual and physical inspection of equipment, opening live wells and drain plugs, lowering motors, draining ballasts, checking anchors, and checking fishing gear.

Please welcome the inspectors as you enjoy Wright County lakes.

If you need to decontaminate your equipment before or after you visit a lake, you can go to our courtesy decontamination station at:

1300 Business Blvd Annandale, MN 55302  
Open May 13 - October 1, 7 days a week from 9am-5pm

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# The Environmental Impact of Properly Disposing of Pet and Lawn Waste

While it may seem insignificant, the way we handle common types of waste can have a significant impact on the environment. Let's explore why it matters and what we can do to make a positive change.

## Environmental Consequences

Pet and lawn waste, when not appropriately disposed of, can contribute to water quality concerns:

- **Bacterial Loading**- When pet waste is left on the ground or washed into storm drains, it eventually finds its way into water bodies. This waste carries harmful bacteria and pathogens that contaminate water sources, making them unsafe for aquatic life and potentially affecting human health if consumed.
- **Nutrient Imbalance**- Lawn waste, such as grass clippings and leaves, can release excessive nutrients into nearby water bodies when washed into storm drains. This nutrient overload leads to eutrophication—a process where an excess of nutrients causes algal blooms, depleting oxygen levels and harming aquatic ecosystems.



## Community Involvement

Promoting proper waste disposal is not solely an individual responsibility—it requires collective effort. Here are a few ways to engage your community:

- **Education Programs**- Collaborate with local schools, community centers, and organizations to organize educational workshops on responsible waste disposal practices, highlighting the importance of pet and lawn waste management.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns**- Launch awareness campaigns that emphasize the environmental impact of pet and lawn waste and offer practical tips for proper disposal. Utilize social media, flyers, and community notice boards to reach a broader audience.
- **Pet Waste Stations**- Advocate for the installation of pet waste stations in public areas, including parks and sidewalks. These stations make it convenient for pet owners to dispose of waste responsibly.

Properly disposing of pet and lawn waste is an essential step towards safeguarding the environment.

## Responsible Disposal Practices

By adopting responsible disposal practices, we can help mitigate the environmental impact of pet and lawn waste. Consider the following guidelines:

### Pet Waste

- **Pick Up and Bag It**- Always pick up after your pets, using biodegradable bags if available, and dispose of the waste in designated pet waste bins or your regular trash.
- **Compost Options**- If you have a backyard composting system, you can compost pet waste as long as you use a specialized pet waste composting system or a designated compost bin.



### Lawn Waste

- **Grass-cycling**- Leave grass clippings on your lawn after mowing. They act as a natural fertilizer and contribute to healthier soil by returning valuable nutrients.
- **Mulching and Composting**- If you prefer to collect grass clippings and leaves, consider using them for mulching or composting. This reduces waste while providing natural nutrients to your garden.





## Healthy Wetlands Control Mosquitos

With the welcomed return of sunshine, warm weather, much-needed snow melt, and spring rains also comes that familiar buzzing sound in our ears – mosquitoes! Contrary to popular belief, healthy, functioning wetlands can actually reduce mosquito populations. Wetlands provide a natural habitat for a variety of species, including predators of mosquitoes, such as dragonflies, bats, and certain species of fish. These natural predators feed on mosquito larvae and help regulate their populations. Healthy wetlands generally have dense stands of native vegetation that provide shading to reduce water temperatures, making it less suitable for mosquito larvae to survive.



Storm water ponds are important to mitigate the effects of development, however, their inability to support natural plant and wildlife populations found in healthy wetlands can result in ideal breeding conditions for mosquitos.

Wetlands also help mitigate the effects of flooding, preventing water from ponding in other areas that otherwise wouldn't naturally flood. Mosquitoes thrive in areas of stagnant water that doesn't function as healthy wetlands – old tires, cans, containers, storm water ponds, or natural wetlands that have been degraded by drainage or excessive nutrients.

The Wright SWCD works with landowners to restore and improve wetland areas by re-establishing their natural hydrologic condition, native plant communities, and wildlife populations that help keep mosquito populations in check.

**"Healthy, functioning wetlands can actually reduce mosquito populations"**







## Water Quality Management Projects

Wright SWCD staff are hard at work with several water quality monitoring projects this year. We continue to monitor the sand-iron filter near Martha Lake and the limestone filter near Mink Lake.

We are collecting our second year of oxygen profiles on five lakes near Howard Lake, MN. In addition, we are collecting the first year of oxygen profiles at four more lakes: Brooks, Camp, French and Granite. These profiles help determine how nutrients move within the lake. Generally, we try to get two years of data.

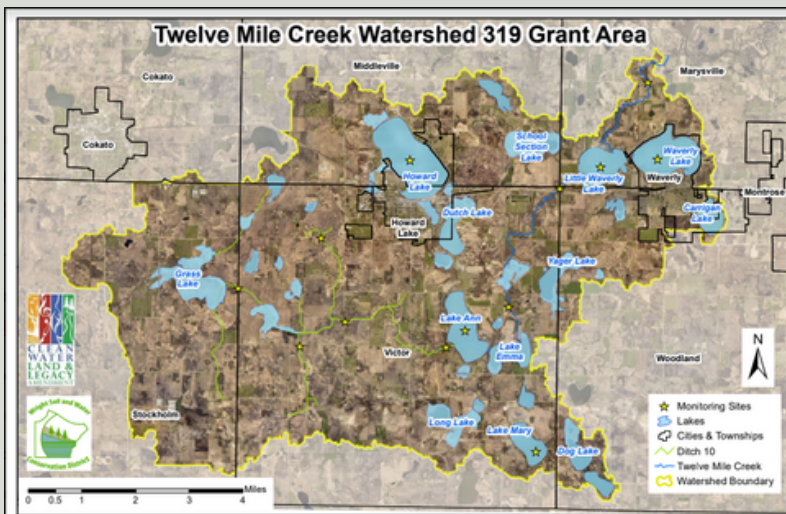
A new project this year is monitoring nutrients in County Ditch 10 and Twelve Mile Creek. This project will help determine areas of high nutrient loading, and will be continued for several years to observe changes in water quality.



Alicia O'Hare and Dan Nelson installing equipment for the Mink filter.



Wright SWCD intern, Dan Nelson, takes a flow measurement in Ditch 10.







# Maple Lake Community Effort

Maple Lake is an 862-acre lake located in north central Wright County. The lake has a relatively small drainage area, comprised of residential development, agricultural land, natural wetlands, and woodlands. The lake is a popular recreation lake, accessible by public boat launches on the northeast and southwest shores, and a productive fishery.

Maple Lake Property Owners Association (MLPOA), Les and Kitty Rasset, and lake property owner Gordy Paumen partnered with Wright SWCD to address agricultural runoff and soil erosion affecting Maple Lake.

On April 13th, 2022, five inches of rain fell in the area on top of frozen ground causing topsoil to erode and migrate onto neighboring lands downstream and into Maple Lake.

An analysis of the surrounding watershed showed that Les Rasset's 40-acre agricultural field was draining relatively unchecked into Maple Lake. The Wright SWCD worked with Les and Kitty Rasset to develop a combination of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to mitigate as much of the surface water as possible. A water and sediment control basin was constructed in his field allowing temporary ponding to slow water down without damaging crops.

A grade stabilization structure was installed along the edge of an actively receding gully to prevent more erosion from washing downstream.

Finally, Les planted a 100 foot wide buffer strip of orchard grass along the edge of his field to help slow water and filter out sediment while still allowing him to keep the land in production. The project will prevent the loss of topsoil and nutrients from the field, while reducing sediment and nutrient loading into Maple Lake.

## PROJECT DETAILS

### Components

- o Earthen Embankments
- o Drain Tile
- o Native Vegetation
- o Perennial Crop Cover



### Benefits

- o Sediment Reduction
- o Water Quality Improvement
- o Protection of Farmland

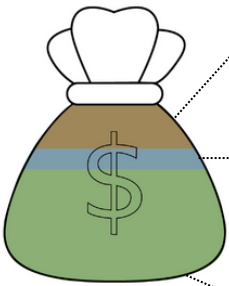


### Partners

- o Les and Kitty Rasset
- o Gordy and Paumen
- o Maple Lake Property Owners Association
- o North Fork Crow River Association
- o North Fork Crow River 1W1P
- o Wright SWCD



## PROJECT COST



MLPOA: \$13,005.82

Wright County Project Funds: \$6,017.43

North Fork Crow River 1W1P: \$33,000.00



Final Construction Plans



During Construction: Berm and installing tile at head of gully



Finished: Cover crop is greening up on the berm

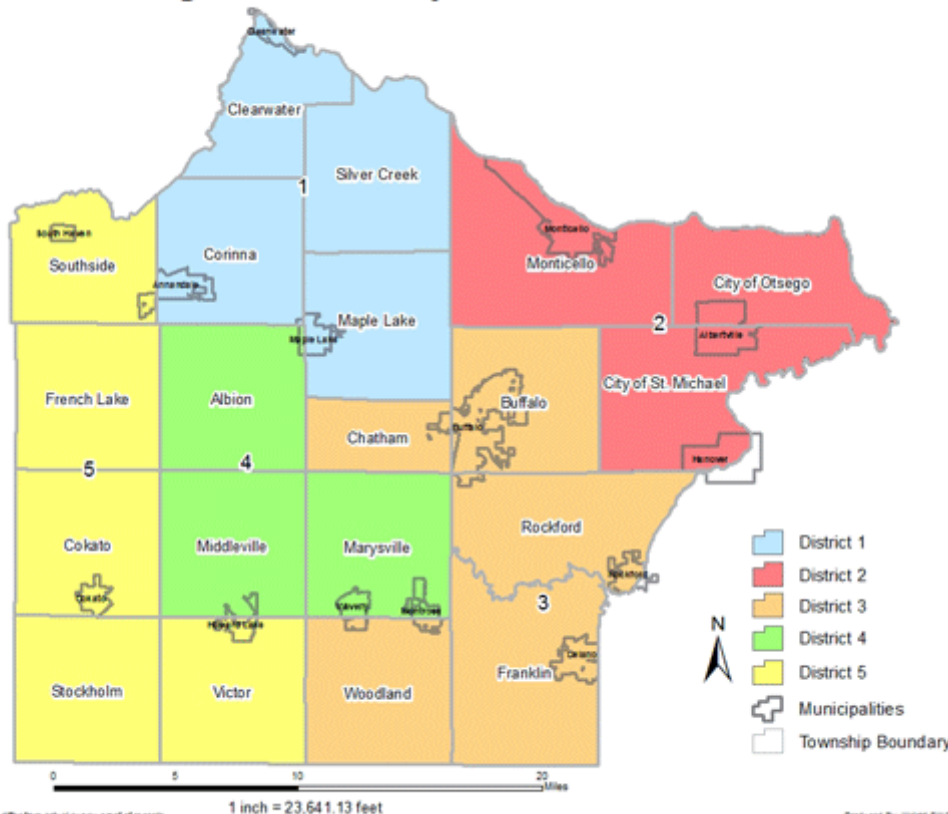
# SWCD Supervisors

The Wright SWCD's Board is comprised of five Supervisors who are elected by nomination districts on the county wide general election. Supervisor terms are staggered every four years. Supervisors receive a per diem of \$75 per board meeting and meet once a month to set goals, policies, and priorities for the District.



Back Row (left to right): Duane Dahlman – Vice Chair, Bill Daluge – Supervisor, Mike Zieska – Supervisor. Front Row (left to right): Jeff Burns – Secretary/Treasurer, Chris Uecker – Chair.

## Wright SWCD Supervisor's Districts



### District 1

Mike Zieska

Annandale, Clearwater, Corinna, Silver Creek, Maple Lake

### District 2

Jeff Burns

Albion, Monticello, Otsego, St. Michael, Hanover

### District 3

Bill Daluge

Buffalo, Chatham, Rockford, Delano, Franklin, Montrose, Woodland

### District 4

Chris Uecker

Albion, Middleville, Montrose, Marysville, Waverly, Howard Lake

### District 5

Duane Dahlman

Southside, South Haven, Annandale, French Lake, Cokato, Howard Lake, Stockholm, Victor



## NEW STAFF



**Katie Frederick**  
Operations Specialist

Katie's educational background includes a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and Master's Degree in Human Resource Management. Professionally she has several years working in full cycle accounting, grant execution, event coordination, payroll and benefits, and marketing and publications. Welcome to the team Katie!

**Dan Nelson**  
Field Intern



Dan grew up in Wright County and recently returned after several years living in Tennessee and Washington State. A couple weeks away from graduating with degrees in Natural Resource Management and Sustainability from Oregon State University, Dan joined the team as a field intern and is assisting with water quality monitoring, lake sampling, GIS applications, and more. In his free time, Dan enjoys hiking, reading, and watching sports, and is looking forward to his next fishing trip in the BWCAW and traveling abroad.

**Ella Goede**  
Marketing Intern



Ella just finished her second year at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities studying Marketing and Business. She joined the team as a marketing intern helping out with website rebranding, content creation, photography, and outreach efforts. For fun, Ella enjoys painting, crocheting, and being out on the lake!

## SWCD STAFF

Wright SWCD staff work with private landowners throughout the county on various soil and water projects to enhance and protect our natural resources.

### Soil & Water Staff Directory:

- Luke Johnson** | District Manager
- Katie Frederick** | Operations Specialist
- Mike Candler** | Natural Resources Engineer
- Eric Mattson** | Conservation Technician
- Sandra Hessedal** | Office Assistant
- Andrew Grean** | Senior Wetland Resource Conservationist
- Dan Nadeau** | Senior Resource Conservationist
- Alicia O'Hare** | Water Resource Specialist





**WRIGHT SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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