

WRIGHT SWCD NEWS

SPRING NEWSLETTER OF WRIGHT SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



**2022 AIS
INSPECTORS**

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2022 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES INSPECTORS

Meet our 2022 Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Inspectors! AIS inspectors will be staffing public boat launches throughout the county between 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 see them before you enjoy Wright County lakes.

If you do 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. It will be open May 26-September 25, 2022 seven days a week from 9am-5pm.



MY LAKESHORE PROPERTY IS A WETLAND?!

Yes, your lakeshore property may be considered wetland that is subject to wetland regulations!

Wetlands can generally be defined as lands that are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water – wetlands must have hydric soils, sufficient saturation or inundation of water to support hydrophytic vegetation, and under normal conditions a prevalence of such vegetation.

Depending on the topography of your shoreline, the water level of the lake, the presence of springs or high-water tables, or other sources of water, the property may be wet long enough to develop these wetland indicators.

Oftentimes “low” lakeshore properties may have soggy soils in the spring but are relatively dry throughout the rest of the summer and can be manicured as a lawn – these areas may still be considered wetland and subject to various regulations.

Projects that involve the addition of fill (increasing the elevation of a shoreline with fill, sand for a beach, etc.), drainage (creating a ditch or adding tile to drain an area), or excavation, may require a permit prior to implementation.

Resources such as the National Wetland Inventory can provide a general idea of where wetlands might exist, however, this is only an approximation and cannot be used to define the true wetland boundary on a property. In addition to the wetland boundary, the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL) designates “the line” where DNR jurisdiction begins.

To ensure compliance with your project, we encourage early coordination with Wright County Planning and Zoning, Department of Natural Resources, and Wright SWCD Staff prior to doing any work. Some projects may fall under the jurisdiction of all agencies referenced above which is why early coordination is vital so there are no “surprises” as you plan your project or find out it is in violation after-the-fact.



The above figure shows an example of where jurisdictions may exist for a project. The Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL) designates the elevation in which a permit may be required through the DNR. The Wetland Boundary designates the actual extent of wetlands along the shoreline subject to MN Wetland Conservation Act rules, and the red line designates those projects within the OHWL, Wetland Boundary, and above may require a permit through Wright County Planning and Zoning.

TREES AND POLLINATORS

Planting Trees

Arbor Day is an annual event that takes place on the last Friday in April. Arbor Day means we celebrate planting trees. And how do we celebrate? We plant more trees! Each spring the Wright SWCD has a seedling tree sale that is open to all. Pre-orders are taken starting in February, and extras are sold in conjunction with the pick-up times. This year was great, with 400 pre-orders and approximately 49,000 trees and shrubs sold. You can also buy trees at local nurseries and online through sources such as arborday.org.

The benefits of trees are endless, they are beautiful, they provide shade to cool homes, water, and the ground, protection from the wind, provide habitat for pollinators and wildlife, they create oxygen to breathe, they improve soil health, reduce erosion, and capture carbon from the atmosphere. Not to mention all of the wood and wood fiber products trees are used for, such as building materials and paper. Consider planting trees wherever and whenever possible, the world will be better for it. "The best time to plant a tree is 10 years ago, the second best is today."

Pollinator Friendly Yards

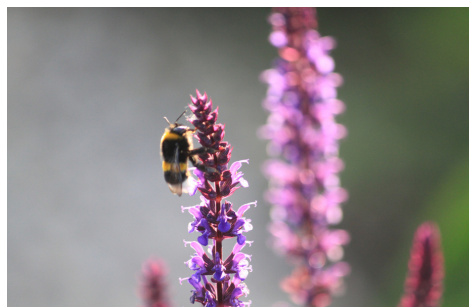
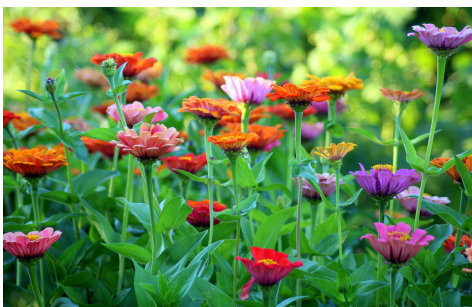
Have you heard of "No-Mow May?" Maybe you are even participating. No-Mow May is a way to encourage homeowners to allow flowering plants in their lawn to bloom, thus providing food for pollinators. This practice reduces yard costs for the month and provides pollinators a forage source early in the growing season when there isn't much blooming yet. Some cities have started to participate by waiving their lawn and weed ordinances for the month.

There are other things that you can do as well. Interseeding or planting a "Bee Lawn" will increase the types and numbers of flowering plants in your lawn that can provide forage to pollinators. See the U of M Extension page: <https://extension.umn.edu/landscape-design/planting-and-maintaining-bee-lawn>.

Planting a small garden with native plants or "pocket prairie" can provide forage, refuge and nesting sites for pollinators. Native plants, including flowering native trees and shrubs will provide the most benefit. "Leave the Leaves" is dead flower stems and leaves that are used by some pollinators for nesting. Leave them over winter and until temperatures are consistently warm so that young pollinators have a chance to emerge. When cutting back old flower stems, leave them at heights of 6-24" to provide nesting sites for the flowering season. Bare ground and old logs clump forming grasses can be provided for nesting sites as well.

"Go pesticides free" lawn chemicals can kill flowering plants that provide forage, but they also might be directly toxic to pollinators. Do not buy flowers or plants that have been treated with pesticides such as neonicotinoids.

Lastly, encourage others to do the same. Post a sign in your yard, talk with your neighbors, post and discuss on social media and encourage the local government to stop harmful practices and provide pollinator habitat. The pollinators will appreciate it and your yard will be much more interesting and full of life.



MINNESOTA AG WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP) is a voluntary opportunity for farmers and agricultural landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices that protect our water.

Those who implement and maintain approved farm management practices will be certified and in turn obtain regulatory certainty for a period of ten years.

Through this program, certified producers receive:

- Regulatory certainty: certified producers are deemed to be in compliance with any new water quality rules or laws during the period of certification
- Recognition: certified producers may use their status to promote their business as protective of water quality
- Priority for technical assistance: producers seeking certification can obtain specially designated technical and financial assistance to implement practices that promote water quality

Through this program, the public receives:

- Assurance that certified producers are using conservation practices to protect Minnesota's lakes, rivers and streams

How to sign up:

If you are interested in becoming water quality certified, contact the Wright SWCD office at 763-682-1970.

**Information provided by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture*

WATER & SEDIMENT CONTROL BASINS

Wright Soil and Water Conservation District, in partnership with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), installed water and sediment control basins (WaSCoBs) to address significant soil erosion coming from an agricultural field in the Cokato Lake watershed.

Cokato Lake is listed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as an impaired lake, due to its high phosphorus levels. 10 WaSCoBs were constructed in the field to intercept over 100 acres of agricultural runoff and retain the ponded water for up to 24 hours while discharging runoff at a greatly reduced rate. The WaSCoBs serve to drop out suspended sediment in the pooling areas upstream of the berms and prevent soil erosion downstream by reducing the peak flow from storm events, reducing the transport of sediment and nutrients to Cokato Lake.

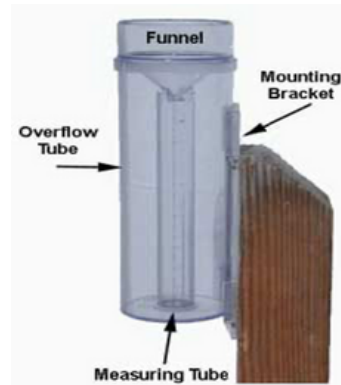


Wright SWCD and the NRCS worked closely with the landowner on these voluntary conservation practices to develop a plan that would curb field erosion and still allow the producer to continue farming.

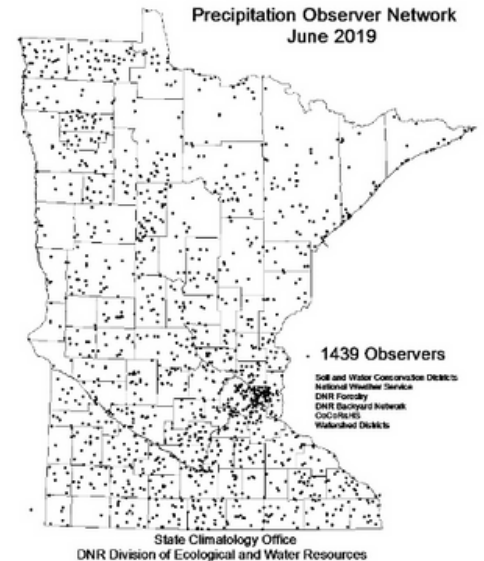
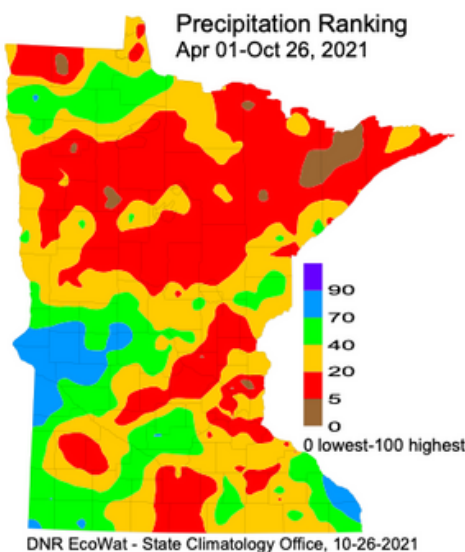
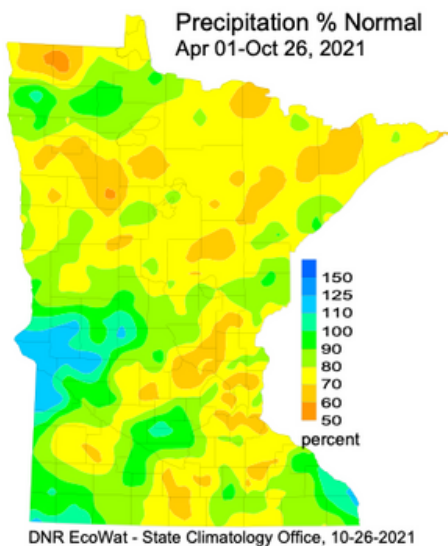
PRECIPITATION OBSERVERS

The Wright Soil and Water Conservation District partners with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) Climatology to obtain volunteer citizen rain gauge readers who report monthly rain and snow readings along with any other type of weather we have in Wright County.

At the end of every year, a weather summary is provided to all partners and rain gauge readers. The data provided by the volunteer rain gauge readers is critical to understanding Minnesota's dynamic weather patterns along with determining lake levels, justify crop losses, track drought conditions and also used for various research projects. MNDNR has a network of 1,400 statewide observers across all networks.



The MNDNR provides rain gauges to volunteer citizens to collect and record precipitation.



FILE FOR WRIGHT SWCD SUPERVISOR BEFORE MAY 31

Wright County SWCD has two Supervisor positions up for election. SWCD candidates appear on the ballot for the general election which will take place November 7, 2022. Candidates are elected countywide but must reside in one of the nomination districts up for election.

This year District I (townships of Clearwater, Corinna, Maple Lake and Silver Creek and those portions of the cities of Annandale, Clearwater, and Maple Lake) and District III (townships of Buffalo, Chatham, Franklin, Rockford, and Woodland) will appear on the ballot.

Those who are interested in running for a Supervisor position who live in either District I or District III should file at the Wright County Auditor's office by May 31. Additional information and details can be found below.

WRIGHT SWCD BOARD OF SUPERVISOR ELECTIONS

TWO SUPERVISORS FOR THE WRIGHT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT – ONE LOCATED IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING DISTRICTS:

District I – Clearwater, Corinna, Maple Lake and Silver Creek Townships and those portions of the Cities of Annandale, Clearwater and Maple Lake located within the District I geographic township boundaries.

District III – Buffalo, Chatham, Franklin, Rockford & Woodland within the District III geographic township boundaries.

QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED FOR POSITION:

- HAVE an interest in conservation and wise use of the natural resources
- BE an **ELIGIBLE VOTER** and **RESIDE** within one of the open Nomination Districts (shown above) at least 30 days before the general election
- BE at least **21** years of age
- HAVE no other affidavit on file as a candidate for any office at the general election (the exception being mayor, council member or town supervisor for a town under 2,500 population)

CALL (763) 682-1970 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING:

COMPENSATION (currently \$75.00 per meeting)

DUTIES (policy setting/grant management)

MEETINGS (usually one per month)

YOUR QUESTIONS

ELECTION FILING DATES OPEN BETWEEN:

May 17 and May 31 (5:00 p.m.) 2022

TO BE ON THE NOVEMBER ELECTION BALLOT, FILE AN "AFFIDAVIT OF CANDIDACY"

AT THE

WRIGHT COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Wright County Government Center

Buffalo, Minnesota

At the time of filing, candidates must pay a \$20.00 Filing Fee or submit a "PETITION IN LIEU OF FILING FEE" form.

SWCD SUPERVISORS

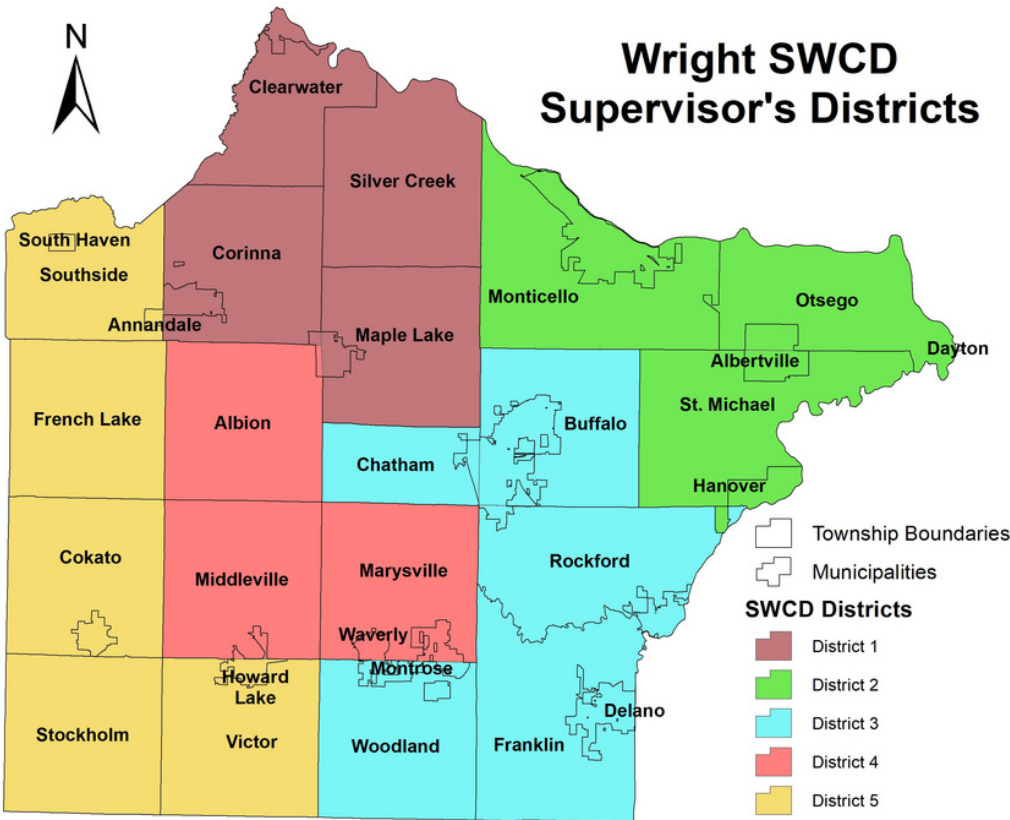
The Wright SWCD's Board is comprised of five Supervisors who are elected by nomination districts on the county wide general election.

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.



District 1

Mike Zieska
Clearwater, Silver Creek, Maple Lake, Corinna

District 2

Jeff Burns
Monticello, Otsego, Dayton, Albertville, St. Michael, Hanover

District 3

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

District 4

Chris Uecker
Albion, Middleville, Marysville, Waverly

District 5

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



Wright SWCD Staff Members (left to right): Front row: Alicia O'Hare, Pam Kuhn, and Luke Johnson. Back row: Dan Nadeau, Eric Mattson, Mike Candler, Andrew Grean, and Sandra Hessedal.

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
- Pam Kuhn** | Administrative Assistant
- 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 Management Specialist



PHOTO CONTEST

Submit a photo(s) in one of the four contest categories (Landscape & Wildlife, Active Recreation, Humorous or Unusual Observation, and Conservation Efforts) by December 1, 2022.

Select photo entries will be posted on the Wright SWCD's Facebook page. Photos must be taken between January 1, 2022 and December 1, 2022. All photos entered in the contest must be taken within Wright County. No photo shopped pictures will be accepted.

One first and second place winner will be chosen in each of the four categories. First place winners will receive a prize of \$100 and second place will receive \$50. Multiple entries are accepted.

See [Entry Form](#) for more details, categories, and contest rules.

Category 1: Landscape & Wildlife

Photo entries should represent the natural environment that can be found on one of our many landscapes in Wright County such as prairie, forest, lakes, wetlands, etc.

Category 2: Active Recreation

Photos entered in this category should showcase the active recreational opportunities offered by the lakes and streams in Wright County. Activities may include, but are not limited to; canoeing, kayaking, boating, swimming, tubing, hiking, wading, fishing, and hunting.

Category 3: Humorous or Unusual Observation

This category allows you to use your imagination. Entries can include unusual wildlife, recreation, catches, or just an unusual photo.

Category 4: Conservation Efforts

Depictions of conservation practices at work on the landscape such as tree plantings, native vegetation, clean-up efforts, water sampling, and cropland conservation.



**WRIGHT SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

311 BRIGHTON AVE SOUTH, SUITE C
BUFFALO, MN 55313
763-682-1970