



Agenda

Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission

February 10, 2020 - 3:30 p.m., Teleconference via Zoom

1. Call to Order
2. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
(please limit audience comments to five minutes)
3. Approval of Agenda Action
4. Approval of Minutes from the January 13, 2021, Meeting Action
5. Business Items
 - a. Progress Update on Wetland Restoration in Castle Rock Township Information
 - b. Presentation on Current Cost-Share Programs of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District Information
7. Updates
 - a. Chairperson's Report
 - b. Staff Updates
8. Adjourn Action

Please note, the February 10 Planning Commission meeting will take place **via teleconference by phone and/or the web-based application, Zoom**. In response to COVID-19, no in-person meeting will be available. We are following provisions in Minnesota Open Meeting Law addressing meetings in the case of pandemic.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://dakotacountymn.zoom.us/j/96236682749?pwd=NjU0OWpzbjI4TjRqYlF0UzcxG4wUT09>

Meeting ID: 962 3668 2749

Passcode: 528866

One tap mobile

+16513728299,,96236682749#,,,,*528866# US (Minnesota)

Dial by your location

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Meeting ID: 962 3668 2749

Passcode: 528866

Find your local number: <https://dakotacountymn.zoom.us/u/aeThDmJlc>



Other Information

Next Meeting Date: **March 10, 2021** at 3:30 p.m.

Please confirm your attendance by contacting Mark Zabel at mark.zabel@co.dakota.mn.us
You will be notified if the meeting is cancelled due to an anticipated lack of quorum.



Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission Meeting

January 13, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.

Zoom Videoconference

WPC Members in Attendance

Josh Borton Chuck Clanton
Tony Wotzka Mark Henry
Ken Betzold Steve Hamrick

Staff in Attendance

Mark Zabel, VRWJPO
Mark Ryan, VRWJPO
Paula Liepold, VRWJPO
Travis Thiel, VRWJPO

Others in Attendance

Curt Coudron, Dakota County SWCD
Laurie Halverson, Commissioner,
Dakota County

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Henry at 3:35 p.m. Roll call was taken.

2. Election of Officers

Mark Zabel opened nominations for Chair. Motion by Commissioner Clanton for Commissioner Henry as Chair. Commissioner Henry accepted the nomination. Zabel called for any further nominations and made a third call for nominations. There were no further nominations. Zabel then called for any objection to election of Commissioner Henry to the position of Chair by acclamation. There were no objections. Zabel declared Commissioner Henry elected to Chair by acclamation and turned control of the meeting over to Mr. Henry.

Commissioner Henry called for nominations for Vice-chair. No members offered a nomination. Commissioner Henry asked again for a member to make a nomination and provided some time for response. When there was no response, Commissioner Henry then made a nomination of Commissioner Betzold as Vice-chair. Commissioner Henry then called for further nominations and repeated the call for nominations a third time. There were no further nominations. Commissioner Henry then suggested the election of Commissioner Betzold to Vice-chair via White Ballot. Commissioner Henry asked if there was any objection to this action and there was none. Commissioner Henry then declared Commissioner Betzold elected to Vice-chair. Commissioner Henry noted that Commissioner Betzold has served as Township Chairman in the past and served well in that capacity.

3. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

None

4. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Henry asked for a motion to approve the agenda as provided in the packet.

Motion by Commissioner Borton, second by Commissioner Betzold, to approve the agenda. The agenda was unanimously approved by 6-0 roll call.

5. Approval of Minutes

Zabel indicated to the members that Commissioner Clanton had contacted him earlier in the day to inform him that information pertinent to the meeting was missing from the draft minutes. Upon review of the draft minutes provided in the meeting packet, Zabel discovered that indeed pages were missing; the first half of the meeting was noted but the second half was not. This may have occurred in compiling the materials into the packet for posting. Zabel then corrected the minutes by including the missing materials in a revised set of draft minutes that was distributed to members via email in anticipation of the requirement for corrections at this meeting. Zabel suggested members refer to this revised version and provide any additional corrections which would be incorporated upon their approval. There were no further corrections or other changes suggested.

Motion by Commissioner Clanton, second by Commissioner Borton, to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020, meeting, as revised. The minutes were unanimously approved by 6-0 roll call vote.

6. Business Items

6a. Recommendation to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District for Services in 2021

Zabel outlined that this item is for an agreement with the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) that is pursued annually to allow cooperation and collaboration between the VRWJPO and the Dakota County SWCD to implement water quality improvement projects within the watershed. This year there are no significant changes to the work plan or budget as compared to last year. Zabel then requested Curt Coudron from the SWCD provide any further comments or detail pertinent to the requested recommendation.

Coudron commented that the Dakota SWCD is highly appreciative of the partnership and the opportunities for collaboration that are provided through this agreement. The agreement allows both organizations the opportunity to share strengths in implementing our missions and getting projects in the ground. Coudron then detailed the individual elements of the work plan.

When Coudron was highlighting the importance of work on feasibility and preliminary design, Chair Henry asked if people are generally cooperative with the work proposed by the staff of the SWCD when they are either approached by the SWCD for a conservation project or they reach out to the SWCD for a potential project on their property. Coudron responded that both approaches occur, the SWCD staff are approached by interested landowners and staff also approach landowners to try to encourage implementation of targeted practices. Coudron commented that it is usually easier when the landowner is the initiator, but that cooperation occurs with both.

Chair Henry also commented that he believes SWCD and others have been successful in getting more habitat on the ground in Dakota County than there has been in the past and asked if SWCD staff are seeing that as well. Coudron commented that he agrees that there is probably more habitat in the

landscape, in his opinion, than in the past but it is structured differently. Habitat is now more consolidated into big chunks where in the past it was more distributed in woodlots, fence lines, and the like. Chair Henry agreed with those statements.

Commissioner Clanton asked about the amount of CIP funding allocated (\$61,000) and how many projects is that distributed to. Coudron indicated that 14 projects were completed using those funds last year. Clanton also asked how much the use of those funds leverage other funding. Coudron responded that funds are usually leveraged at an equal level. Cover crops leverage Clean Water Funds through the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Project dollars are leveraged from landowners or other partners and the VRWJPO funds provide incentive that allows projects to be implemented that otherwise might not occur. Coudron noted that these dollars also attract technical assistance opportunities available through Clean Water Fund or other partners such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Motion by Commissioner Wotzka, second by Commissioner Betzold, to recommend execution of a joint powers agreement with the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District. The motion passed on an 6-0 roll-call vote.

6b. Recommendation to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with Scott Soil and Water Conservation District for Services in 2021

There was no representative from Scott SWCD at the meeting so Mark Zabel provided representation for the item. Zabel indicated that there were no differences between the work plan and budget presented compared to the work plan and budget in last year's agreement. However, members should be aware that there is a request to amend the Watershed Plan to include a project for an outlet repair on a wetland basin called the Bemis Wetland to be added to the implementation section. The public hearing related to this plan change was an item on the November 2020 meeting agenda. If that project is constructed it may impact the budget and the Scott SWCD may request an amendment the agreement in the future. This was not included at this time due to the uncertainty associated with the timing and the potential for funding from grants or other partner participation.

Chair Henry commented that he was curious as to the proportionality between the Dakota and Scott SWCD budgets in these agreements in comparison to the land areas serviced. Zabel commented that Scott SWCD generally overbudgets the CIP category for them to assure that they have funds to cover any project contracts that may come forward during the term of the agreement and rarely make use of all of those funds. Therefore, the VRWJPO has not had issue with needs identified through their work plan. If this did become an issue, we might need to do more work in cooperation with the Scott SWCD in project targeting and prioritization. Zabel noted that the Scott SWCD is currently slated to receive grant funding through the Watershed Based Implementation Fund program through the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources to complete a subwatershed assessment in this area which will serve to identify and prioritize potential projects going forward. Chair Henry indicated he was satisfied with that answer.

Motion by Commissioner Borton, second by Commissioner Clanton, to recommend execution of a joint powers agreement with the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District. The motion passed on an 6-0 roll-call vote.

6c. Review Applications for Vacant Seats on the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission

Chair Henry asked how many seats are currently open to be filled by appointment. Zabel indicated that there are two seats open, Commissioner Rydeen has chosen not to seek appointment to another term

and Commissioner Rohrenbach resigned his seat. There are two open seats and three applicants. Zabel briefly reviewed the three applications. Zabel indicated that the only eligibility criteria for applicants is that they reside within the watershed. Beyond that it is up to the WPC to make recommendations, or if they choose not to make a recommendation, the decision would go to a review group made up of the Chair of the WPC, Chair of the JPB, and the Watershed Administrator to make selection(s) among eligible applicants for recommendation to the Board. Commissioner Borton suggested that upon review of the applications, Riesgraf and Kotz applications stood out as highly qualified and would be assets to the WPC. Commissioners Wotzka, Clanton, and Henry concurred stating that those two applications were prominent in their clear interest in water resources. Commissioner Clanton noted also that the completeness with which these two applicants filled out the application demonstrated their high level of interest.

Motion by Commissioner Clanton, second by Commissioner Borton, to recommend appointments of Andrew Riesgraf and James Kotz to the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission by the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board. The motion passed on an 6-0 roll-call vote.

7. Updates

7a. Chairperson's Report

Chair Henry commented that he is a hunter and has spent time the "Big Slough" fishing the creeks growing up and generally out in the landscapes of Dakota County. He has seen a lot of conservation projects that have been implemented and believes there is probably more habitat in the landscape than in the past (as discussed earlier). He has recently read articles regarding neonicotinoids and their potential impacts. Commissioner Henry asked if members think we are starting to have an emerging issue with chemicals (pesticides) in the landscape having impacts to wildlife. Do we need to start looking at things other than habitat,? Commissioner Henry asked Zabel. Zabel provided some general overview of neonicotinoids and their use and effects as an insecticide. Commissioner Henry went on to describe his observations of the decline of pheasants in the landscape and questions whether this is an effect. Clanton suggested that there are larger issues at play such as the dependence on monoculture cropping and that diversity in cropping would be a help regarding these issues. Commissioner Henry intends to discuss this further with the Dakota County Habitat Alliance group.

7b. Staff Updates

Zabel remarked that everyone has no doubt noticed the absence of Jen Dullum at this meeting. Jen has chosen to leave employment with Dakota County/VRWJPO as of Friday (January 8, 2021) and has accepted employment with a private consulting firm. We wish her well in her new venture.

Mark Ryan shared that the VRWJPO is working with the City of Lakeville doing a bank stabilization on about a mile of Middle Creek in a tributary east of a previous restoration project done a few years ago. Ryan highlighted areas where some specific practices will be implemented on some meander cut banks. He showed both aerial views using GIS and photos taken on-site. Construction is underway now, and Ryan noted that winter construction is unusual on VRWJPO projects, but because this reach is not designated trout stream, work can be done in the winter. Housing is being constructed nearby as this project is underway, and one consideration of doing this project now was to complete the restoration work prior to the entire development being complete to make the project less intrusive.

Ryan then used GIS to describe potential projects to address ravine erosion in Ravenna Township near and west of County Road 54 (Ravenna Trail). Dakota County is putting out a request for proposals to do

some ravine stabilization in this area. There is about 100 feet of fall in some of these ravines. While the engineering budget is from the County, VRWJPO staff will also be involved to provide their input on the design approach.

Chair Henry asks if the WPC could receive a progress report on the Braun Wetland Bank restoration project. Coudron is involved some with the project but agreed with Chair Henry that Dakota SWCD staff, John Stelzner, who is managing much of the project day-to-day, could present a more detailed update.

Paula Liepold is providing some additional support to the VRWJPO in the absence of a communications and outreach staff. Paula listed several of the programs and activities that she will be covering in the interim. Zabel mentioned that he is bringing the open position before the Joint Powers Board for their concurrence to fill.

8. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Betzold, second by Commissioner Clanton, to adjourn the meeting at 4:45 p.m. The motion passed on an 5-0 roll-call vote.

6a. Progress Update on a Wetland Restoration in Castle Rock Township

Meeting Date: 2/10/21
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: John Stelzner
Telephone: 651-480-7779
Prepared by: Mark Zabel



PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

- Progress update on a wetland restoration in Castle Rock Township.

SUMMARY

The Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan includes a sub-goal to “protect, enhance, and restore wetlands” under Goal A: Protect or restore water quality in lakes, streams, and wetlands. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO), in partnership with Dakota County and the Minnesota Board of Water Resources (BWSR), is restoring a wetland within the Vermillion River Watershed creating a wetland bank in the process.

Dakota County (the County), the VRWJPO, and the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) collaboratively identified drained wetland areas with a high potential for wetland restoration that could provide watershed benefits. The SWCD, under agreement with the VRWJPO, completed a landscape assessment to produce a drained wetland inventory.

The SWCD worked with landowners to develop interest in the possibility of wetland restorations through available programs including the potential for development of “wetland banking.” Wetland banking allows for the creation of “wetland credits” on restored wetlands that meet specific restoration criteria. Created wetland credits can be traded in replacement of equivalent wetland acres impacted at another site. Wetland bank areas must be protected permanently under easement.

Upon completion of this Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), plans would be developed for a wetland restoration on a property in Castle Rock Township. The estimated total easement area is 110 acres, with approximately 100 acres of wetland mitigation credits established with project certification. The cost to establish the State wetland bank conservation easement includes an estimated \$964,700 in easement acquisition costs and \$700,000 in construction, seeding, maintenance, and five years of monitoring, for a total project cost estimate of approximately \$1,664,700.

The VRWJPO provided \$500,000 from its Capital Improvement budget and the County will provide up to \$450,000 from the Environmental Resources Department’s Capital Improvement Program budget. The BWSR is providing engineering, project construction oversight and administration of the project. Dakota County, with assistance of the VRWJPO, will provide long-term maintenance. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) allocated \$500,000 for a watershed wetland bank project in its VRWJPO 2017 Budget.

Wetland Banking Policy for the VRWJPO

This policy generally refers to provisions within the Wetland Conservation Act (as amended) and its implementation according to Minnesota Rules Chapter 8420 “Board of Water and Soil Resources Wetland Conservation” (herein referred to as “the Rule”).

The purposes of the Wetland Conservation Act as listed in the Purpose section of the Rule (8420.0100 Subp. 1) are to:

- A. achieve no net loss in the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota’s existing wetlands;
- B. increase the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota’s wetlands by restoring or enhancing diminished or drained wetlands;
- C. avoid direct or indirect impacts from activities that destroy or diminish the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of wetlands; and
- D. replace wetland values where avoidance of activity is not feasible and prudent.

The Rule identifies the following as its method (8420.0100 Subp. 2): “The regulatory provisions of the Wetland Conservation Act advance the purpose in this part by requiring persons proposing to impact a wetland to first, attempt to avoid the impact; second, attempt to minimize the impact, and finally, replace any impacted area with another wetland of at least equal function and value.”

To accomplish this the Rule sets further procedures and standards that must be followed. The Rule and the Act provide minimum standards. Part 8420.0233 provides that: “Local government units may require more procedures and more wetland protection, but not less”. To that end, this policy affects part 8420.0522 of the Rule as it applies to Replacement Standards. Although this policy does not replace the Rule it does supersede its effect in **requiring replacement credits as applied through Wetland Banking (parts 8420.0700 through 8420.0820) to occur within the Vermillion River Watershed for wetland impacts occurring in the Vermillion River Watershed as long as there are wetland bank replacement credits available from a wetland bank within the Watershed.**

Currently there are no wetland bank credits generally available for sale within the Vermillion River Watershed (all available wetland bank credits within the Watershed are either held by public entities for their own replacement purposes or are reserved by others). Recent applications for replacement credits through wetland banking have applied available replacement credits from wetland banks outside the Watershed and County. To be more effective in the implementation of the purposes identified above, as well as in implementing

goals of the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan, the VRWJPO is actively pursuing the development of wetland bank opportunities in the Vermillion River Watershed. The VRWJPO will offer wetland credits for sale on the open market upon the successful completion of a wetland restoration creating a wetland bank where the VRWJPO participates financially in its development. Revenues from the sale of wetland credits will be applied to further restoration of wetlands and development of wetland bank credits for future sale, thus developing a revolving fund to restore wetlands within the Watershed.

The VRWJPO will manage the sale of credits according to the Rule (Parts 8420.0745 through 8420.0755).

Price of wetland credits managed for sale by the VRWJPO shall be set as follows:

When credits are being sold to replace wetland impacts which occurred within the Vermillion River Watershed the price shall be set at 4.5 times the estimated average market value for class 2A agricultural lands graded A, B, or C in Dakota County up to a maximum of \$37,000 per acre.

The price of credits sold for replacement of wetland impacts occurring outside the Vermillion River Watershed shall be set at 5.5 times the estimated average market value for class 2A agricultural lands graded A, B, or C in Dakota County up to a maximum of \$45,000 per acre.

The minimum price at which credits will be sold for replacement of wetland impacts will be the sum of the cost to produce the wetland bank credits (easement and restoration, etc.) plus all fees associated with the wetland bank (as per BWSR Wetland Mitigation Fee Policy) plus \$500 per acre.

6b. Presentation on Current Draft Cost-Share Programs of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District

Meeting Date: 2/10/21
Item Type: Regular-Information
Contact: Curt Coudron
Telephone: 651-480-7774
Prepared by: Mark Zabel



PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

- Presentation on current draft cost-share programs of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District

SUMMARY

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) annually engages with the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) to provide funding for services that implement the mission and goals of the VRWJPO through programs managed via the DCSWCD Board of Supervisors and their staff. One of the key programs of the DCWSCD that provides conservation projects are implemented is their various cost-share programs (see Attachment A). These cost-share programs provide partial funding in partnership with landowners who voluntarily agree to complete conservation projects on their properties. The VRWJPO provides funding to support these programs to provide service delivery efficiency as opposed to developing separate conservation delivery programs serving the same purposes.



LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER GRANT

LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER GRANT PROCESS

The Landscaping for Clean Water Grant program makes it easy for Dakota County residents to plan and install native gardens, raingardens, and native shoreline plantings.

Just follow the steps below!

LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER



Dakota County Soil and
Water Conservation District

- 1. WORKSHOPS** Complete a Landscaping for Clean Water Intro Workshop Class & Design Course and receive help developing site specific project plans and cost estimate.
- 2. APPLICATION** Submit an application, project plans, and cost estimate to Dakota County SWCD for approval prior to beginning installation.
- 3. MEETING** Schedule an on-site meeting and project layout with Dakota County SWCD prior to beginning installation.
- 4. INSTALLATION** Install your Landscaping for Clean Water Project per approved plan! Dakota County SWCD will come out to
- 5. RECEIVE \$250** You will be awarded a \$250 grant from Dakota County SWCD upon project completion.

LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER GRANT DEADLINES

	Application	Project Completion*
Round 1	April 21, 2021	July 9, 2021
Round 2	May 26, 2021	August 27, 2021
Round 3	July 14, 2021	October 15, 2021

* Grant automatically expires if the project is not completed by this date

Visit www.dakotaSWCD.org for additional information.



Raingarden



Native Garden



Native Shoreline
Planting

14 YEARS OF CLEAN WATER
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Workshop Participants 4,765

Projects Completed 625



CITIZEN CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM



APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted all year

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Erosion and Slope Stabilization
- Gully, Wetland, Lake or Stream Restorations
- Sediment Basins
- Bioretention Practices
- Shoreline Stabilizations

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777

COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

Up to \$5,000 of cost share funding may be available to Dakota County property owners for qualifying (non-agricultural) water quality projects that preserve or restore natural resources.

The Citizen Conservation Stewardship (CCS) program supports smaller conservation practices on individual properties by providing technical and cost share assistance. Depending on project ranking and the availability of funding, cost share amounts up to \$5,000 may be approved to reimburse the applicant for up to 75% of the actual project cost.

PROJECTS WILL BE COMPETITIVELY RANKED BASED ON:

- Water Quality Improvement
- Benefits to Wetlands, Lakes and Streams
- Soil Erosion Control
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Public Benefit / Public Outreach
- Innovative Applications
- Collaboration With Other Landowners or Organizations



CONSERVATION INITIATIVE FUNDING PROGRAM



COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

Up to \$25,000 of cost share funding may be available to install conservation practices that reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality above the minimum measures required by the regulating agencies.

The Conservation Initiative Funding (CIF) program supports larger conservation practices on commercial or multiple properties by providing technical and cost share assistance. Depending on project ranking and the availability of funding, cost share amounts up to \$25,000 may be approved to reimburse the applicant up to 75% of the actual project cost.

PROJECTS WILL BE COMPETITIVELY RANKED BASED ON:

- Water Quality Improvement
- Benefits to Wetlands, Lakes and Streams
- Soil Erosion Control
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Public Benefit / Public Outreach
- Innovative Applications
- Collaboration With Other Landowners or Organizations

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted all year

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- New or Redevelopment with Low Impact Development Practices
- Stormwater Retrofit with Best Management Practices
- Erosion and Slope Stabilization
- Gully, Wetland, Lake or Stream Restorations
- Bioretention Practices
- Shoreline Stabilizations

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777

**COMMUNITY CONSERVATION
PARTNERSHIP****COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!**

Up to \$50,000 of cost share funding may be available to install bioretention and other stormwater Best Management Practices at public facilities in Dakota County to improve water quality above the minimum measures required by the regulating agencies.

The Community Conservation Partnership (CCP) supports public landowners to implement TMDL and local water management plans by providing technical assistance. Depending on project ranking and the availability of funding, cost share amounts up to \$50,000 may be approved to reimburse the applicant for up to 75% of the actual cost. The applicant's contribution can be based on in-kind value.

PROJECTS WILL BE COMPETITIVELY RANKED BASED ON:

- Subwatershed Pollutant Load Modeling to Quantify Water Quality Benefit
- Priority Sites Having Direct Discharge Without Treatment
- Values Comparison - Most Benefit for the Least Cost
- Priority Locations in Critical Watershed Areas
- Installation Timing
- Identified Project in a TMDL or Local Water Plan

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications must be submitted by March 15th, May 15th, or July 15th of each year

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Bioretention
- Infiltration
- Filtration
- Soil Amendments
- Rooftop Disconnect
- Reduced Impervious Surface Areas
- Porous Pavements
- Thermal Impact Prevention and Mitigation Practices
- Snowmelt Treatment
- Stormwater Recycling
- Best Management Practices

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777



INCENTIVE PAYMENT PRACTICES PROGRAM



COST SHARE FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

The Incentive Payment Practices (IPP) program provides funding for the voluntary establishment of conservation projects. All projects must demonstrate a water quality improvement and comply with local, state, and federal regulations. SWCD staff will work with applicants on project planning and design, and to submit a final project application.

Applications are prioritized for funding based on their potential to provide water quality benefits. The number of applications approved may be limited by the amount of funding and staff time available.

PROJECT FUNDING EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Up to 75% cost share funding for installation of conservation projects.
- Up to 90% cost share for projects in areas designated as “priority locations” by the District Board.
- Up to \$300 per acre, per year for up to 15 years, for filter strips.
- Up to \$150 per acre, per year for up to 15 years, for harvestable filter strips.
- \$25 per acre (single year contract) or \$35 per acre per year (multi-year contract) for cover crops
- \$20 per acre (single year contract) or \$30 per acre per year (multi-year contract) for harvestable covers

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications will be ranked and scored periodically throughout the year.
- Cover Crop applications are accepted year-round

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Grassed Waterways
- Water and Sediment Control Basins
- Critical Area Seeding
- Diversions
- Streambank Stabilization
- Filter Strips
- Harvestable Filter Strips
- Feedlot Improvements
- Cover Crops
- Harvestable Covers
- Perennial Crops

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777



COVER CROP INCENTIVES



APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted year-round

POTENTIAL BENEFITS:

- Reduced soil erosion
- Reduced soil compaction
- Enhanced ability of soil to infiltrate water
- Reduced weed growth
- Increased nutrients in the soil
- Increased numbers of desirable insects and micro-fauna
- Potential yield increases

SEEDING PLANS & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Cover crops are used to accomplish many goals such as reducing compaction, fixing nitrogen, suppressing weeds, reducing erosion, or providing additional forage. Common cover crops in Dakota County are cereal rye, oats, tillage radish, clover and winter wheat. One or more cover crop species may be selected based on specific goals.

SWCD staff can help you create a cover crop seeding plan with your goals in mind. Staff can also provide technical assistance and information on planting methods, termination timing, and herbicide and pest control decisions.

INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Apply under the Incentive Payment Practices Program and you could be eligible to receive:

- \$25 per acre under a 1-year contract (max \$2,500 or 100 acres)
- \$35 per acre per year under a multi-year contract (max \$10,500 or 100 acres)

Applications are prioritized for funding based on their potential to provide surface water and groundwater benefits. The number of applications approved may be limited by the funding and staff time available. Please contact the SWCD for specific eligibility requirements and program details.

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777



HARVESTABLE COVER INCENTIVES



WHAT ARE HARVESTABLE COVERS?

Harvestable covers are vegetative cover on cropland for protection from erosion and reduction of nutrient losses to groundwater. Harvestable covers are intended to provide soil and groundwater protection throughout as much of the year as possible. Harvestable covers allow for harvesting of a crop, which can provide income while protecting water resources. Examples of harvestable covers include winter camelina, intermediate wheat grass, winter wheat, or other crops that provide overwinter cover. One or more cover crop species may be selected based on specific goals.

INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Apply under the Incentive Payment Practices Program and you could be eligible to receive:

- \$20 per acre under a 1-year contract using a winter annual (max \$2,000 or 100 acres)
- \$25 per acre per year under a multi-year contract using a winter annual (max \$2,500 or 100 acres)
- \$25 per acre per year under a multi-year contract using a perennial (max \$12,500 or 100 acres)

Applications are prioritized for funding based on their potential to provide surface water and groundwater benefits. The number of applications approved may be limited by the funding and staff time available. Please contact the SWCD for specific eligibility requirements and program details.

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted year-round

POTENTIAL BENEFITS:

- Reduced soil erosion
- Groundwater protection
- Reduced soil compaction
- Enhanced ability of soil to infiltrate water
- Reduced weed growth
- Increased nutrients in the soil
- Increased numbers of desirable insects and micro-fauna
- Ability to generate income while protecting surface and groundwater

CONTACT:

- For more information, call the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District at (651) 480-7777



NATIVE PRAIRIE RESTORATION

COST SHARE



FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR

NATIVE PRAIRIE ESTABLISHMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Native plants provide multiple benefits to local water quality, soil health, and pollinator species. Cost-share funding is available for the installation of native vegetation in Dakota County that protects surface waters and groundwater, reduces erosion, or provides wildlife habitat. Project funds are also available for projects that enhance existing native vegetation to increase habitat quality for pollinators and wildlife. Native Prairie Restorations must be a minimum of 1/2 acre in size.

Funding is sponsored by Dakota County through the Environmental Legacy Fund.

PROJECT FUNDING:

- Apply under the Incentive Payment Practices Program and you could receive up to 75% cost share funding:
 - Up to \$1,000/acre for the enhancement of existing native vegetation with more pollinator-friendly species
 - Up to \$2,000/acre for the installation of native prairie grasses
 - Up to \$3,000/acre for the installation of new native prairie vegetation that includes grasses **and** pollinator-friendly forbs

All project applications are subject to available funding and SWCD Board approval. Funding is based on a percentage of the actual installation costs.

APPLICATION TIMES:

- Applications are accepted all year and will be reviewed and ranked on a monthly basis.

PROJECT PRIORITIES:

- Stabilizing erodible soils
- Filtering runoff to waterways or wetlands
- Protecting groundwater
- Improving wildlife habitat, particularly for pollinators

PROJECT EXAMPLES:

- Site preparation, seed, and planting of native vegetation
- Enhancement of existing native vegetation with pollinator species

PROGRAM PARTNER:



For more information, call the
Dakota County Soil and Water
Conservation District at
(651) 480-7777