

LYON SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



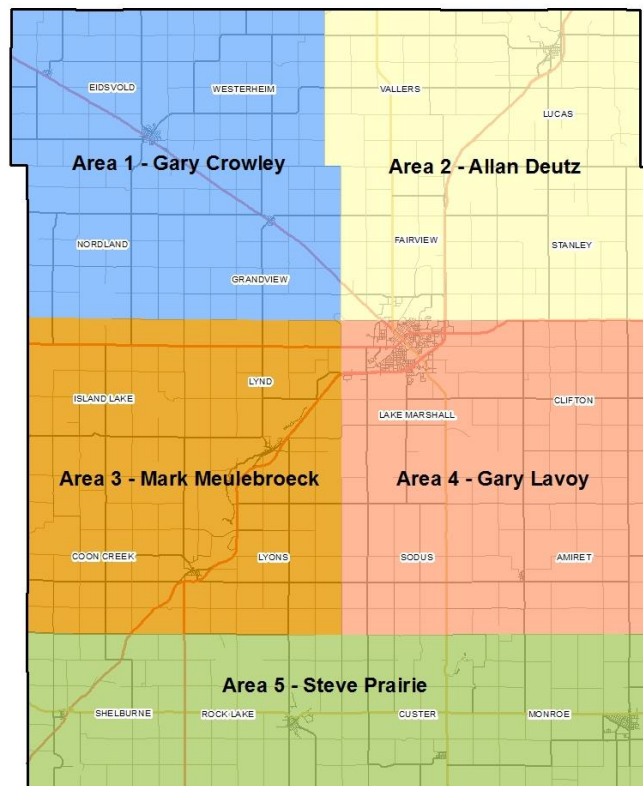
Lyon Soil and Water Conservation District
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I. INTRODUCTION

The Lyon Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a local unit of government defined by Minnesota Statute whose primary purpose is to protect the natural resource features within the county from human degradation. It is the responsibility of the SWCD to provide technical assistance and outreach in resource management programs along with ensuring wise stewardship by users of these resources. The District works closely and cooperatively with the local staff from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to implement programs and activities.

The Lyon SWCD Board of Supervisors provides professional insight and sound judgment in pursuing policies that will most effectively solve resource issues within the county. Through frequent meetings and straight forward direction to staff, the Board is able to maintain a clear understanding of the progress of the District as a whole. The Board is comprised of five supervisors who are elected county wide by general ballot.

Area 1 ~ Gary Crowley
Area 2 ~ Allen Deutz
Area 3 ~ Mark Meulebroeck
Area 4 ~ Gary Lavoy
Area 5 ~ Steve Prairie



Other staff:

John Biren ~ District/Zoning Administrator
Todd Hammer – Assistant Planning & Zoning Ditch Inspector
Luke Olson ~ Conservation Technician
Kyle Andreska ~ Farm Bill Pheasants Forever Biologist
Anita Cauwels ~ Administrative Assistant

NRCS staff:

Jamie Thomazin ~ District Conservationist
David Hagberg ~ Soil Conservationist
Open ~ Administrative Assistant

Monthly Board Meetings for 2015 ~ 4th Tuesday of each month, 12 pm

Mission Statement of Lyon Soil & Water Conservation District

The mission of the Lyon SWCD is to:

1. Establish programs that assist in the protection of the public health, safety and welfare through Soil & Water Conservation and Protection.
2. Encourage land occupiers to conserve and protect our water and soil resources, implement erosion, sediment control and water quality practices.
3. Promote conservation through education, trained personnel and supervisors.
4. Seek and implement conservation practices and programs that will benefit the landowner, the county, local watersheds, and the nation.

Annual Reporting

The Annual Report is presented to show accomplishments in programs and projects that relate to what the SWCD has accomplished in relationship to the priorities set by the Board Supervisors which are:

1. Prevent Wind, Water and Soil Erosion
2. Improve Water Quality and Promote Water Conservation
3. Promote Conservation and Resource Programs
4. Promote Energy Conservation
5. Improve Wildlife Habitat

These priorities reflect the concerns described in the Lyon County Local Comprehensive Water Management Plan that serves as the Lyon SWCD Comprehensive five year work plan.

PROGRAMS that the Lyon Soil & Water Conservation District administers:

Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM)	Environmental Fair
State Cost Share program	Grant Applications
Rainfall Monitoring Program	Arbor Day Presentation
Farmfest Expo	Buffer cost share programs
Clean Water Legacy Grant Programs	DNR Well monitoring
Assistance in Conservation Planning projects	Wetland Conservation Act administration
DNR water permit reviews	Feedlot Inventory
Educational programs	AgBMP Loan Program
Annual Plan and Reports for public information	Well DeCommissioning

Assist Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) with programs

Water Quality Incentive Program	Environmental Quality Incentive Programs (EQIP)
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program
Conservation Plans	Status Reviews

The SWCD has incorporated the needs as addressed by our landowners and partner agencies through information gained in surveys and meetings.

II. Objectives/Concerns to be addressed:

1. Maintain efficient SWCD operations.
2. Provide assistance to land users in high priority wind, soil and water erosion areas of the county and watershed areas.
3. Provide assistance to land users in the high priority areas of the county and watersheds to improve the quality of water in areas that have been identified as impaired.
4. Provide information and education to the public on the benefits and need to protect and reduce use of our resources.
5. Implement EEO and Civil Rights Responsibilities.

The Lyon SWCD Board of Supervisors, have, under staff recommendation, agreed upon a focused set of conservation practices to ensure that objectives of the SWCD are met.

The following is a summary of some of the major workload and projects the SWCD staff has been involved with in 2015.

State Cost Share Program

Lyon SWCD utilized 2015 State Cost-Share, Conservation Delivery, Local Water Management, and Wetland Conservation Act funds to construct eight water and sediment control basins and one

shoreland stabilization project. Total cost-share for the projects was \$47,656.99. 2015 Conservation Delivery funding of \$3,438.23 was also encumbered for a shoreland restoration project.

Local funding from Lyon County was also utilized to assist on an additional nine basins, one well sealing, and partial assistance on a grassed waterway. Total cost-share for the projects was \$47,996.93.

Lyon SWCD also works closely with RCRCRA for funding and technical support.

Educational Promotion

Staff was part of a planning committee to conduct the 2015 Environmental Fair held at the Lyon County Fairgrounds. Attending were approximately 2100 students from southwestern Minnesota. Arbor Day was recognized by two staff holding a tree presentation at local schools. Local Water Plan funds were used to bring the Ecology Bus to four different county schools to talk about conservation and environment.

Reorganization

Lyon SWCD, effective January 1st, 2013, became a department within Lyon County, MN. Staff positions as well as all financial responsibility are being paid through Lyon County. Grant funds are maintained and tracked through a designated fund within Lyon County. SWCD operations along with the County Planning and Zoning department are housed and maintained in the same office at 1424 E. College Drive, Suite 600, Marshall, MN.

As part of the County Planning and Zoning department staff are involved with approval of feedlot permits, as well as septic permitting.

All the feedlot regulation, inspection and education were completed by the SWCD staff. Inspections provided staff opportunities to update records, address potential pollution concerns and environmental threats and educate producers of the current feedlot regulations.

Septic System inspections were completed for verification of soil and system installation certification. Of the fifty-four permits approved eleven of them applied for the County Septic Loan Program funds and were granted approval for funds amounting to \$129,019.77.

USDA Programs

District staff provided administrative assistance support to the NRCS throughout the year and also assisted the USDA in implementation and producer signup as well as the development of plans for programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and EQIP.

The SWCD continues with the NRCS contribution agreement and completed the wetland certified determinations on 66 AD1026 forms.

Shoreland Ordinance

The Shoreland Ordinance in conjunction with the Lyon County zoning ordinance provided assistance and education on best management practices in shoreland areas and reviewed proposed land use activities and permits. A total of eight permits were issued.

Targeted Watershed Grant

In the fall of 2013, Lyon County/SWCD became involved with Lincoln and Yellow Medicine SWCDs and the Yellow Medicine Watershed along with Area II to apply for funds from a pilot program thru BWSR. This grant will focus on impairments of high nutrients and turbidity in the Upper Yellow Medicine River and the South Branch of the Yellow Medicine River. One Watershed, One Plan Pilot

Pheasants Forever

In cooperation with the Pheasants' Forever Farm Bill Biologist position, six perpetual Reinvest in Minnesota contracts were completed. The Farm Bill Biologist also actively promoted and enrolled marginal cropland into the Conservation Reserve Program. Landowner communication is the primary method used by the Biologist to promote various other programs, including the Minnesota Prairie Bank and the Walk-In access program.

Soil & Water Conservation District

Program Partners

Entity	Partnership Contribution
Lyon County	Financial, program assistance
Natural Resources Conservation Service	Programs, technical assistance, staff shared
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Consultations, Contract services with SWCD
Area II Minnesota River Control Area	Technical, financial for projects
Redwood Cottonwood Rivers Control	Cost Share partner for projects, monitoring of resources
Yellow Medicine River Watershed	Cost Share partner for projects, monitoring of resources
Lyon County Sportsman Groups	Financial for projects, education
MN Association of Conservation Districts	Legislative lobbying, education and information
MN Department of Agriculture	Low Interest loan funds, educational information
SW MN Joint Powers TSA	Engineering Assistance
MN Board of Soil & Water Resources	Program direction, grants, training