



Prairie



Wetland



Forest



Pasture



Water



# Sherburne SWCD Highlights 2015





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# 2015 Accomplishments At A Glance



## Education and Outreach

- Education Events Attended: 21
- Education Events Hosted: 9

## Forestry

- Trees Sold: 20,850
- Forest Stewardship Plans: 4
- Acres of Invasive Species Removed: 17

## Storm Water Mitigation

- Total Square Feet: 14,288
- Phosphorus Reduction: 8.2lbs/year
- Suspended Solids Reduction: 72 tons/year

## Water Quality

- Sites Monitored for Bacteria: 2
- Streams Monitored for Flow Measurement: 6
- Streams Monitored for Phosphorus: 5

## Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)

- Wetland Delineations: 23





# SWCD Supervisors and Staff

## Locally Elected SWCD Supervisors



Douglas Hipsag  
Vice Chair  
District I



Shane Berg  
Secretary  
District II



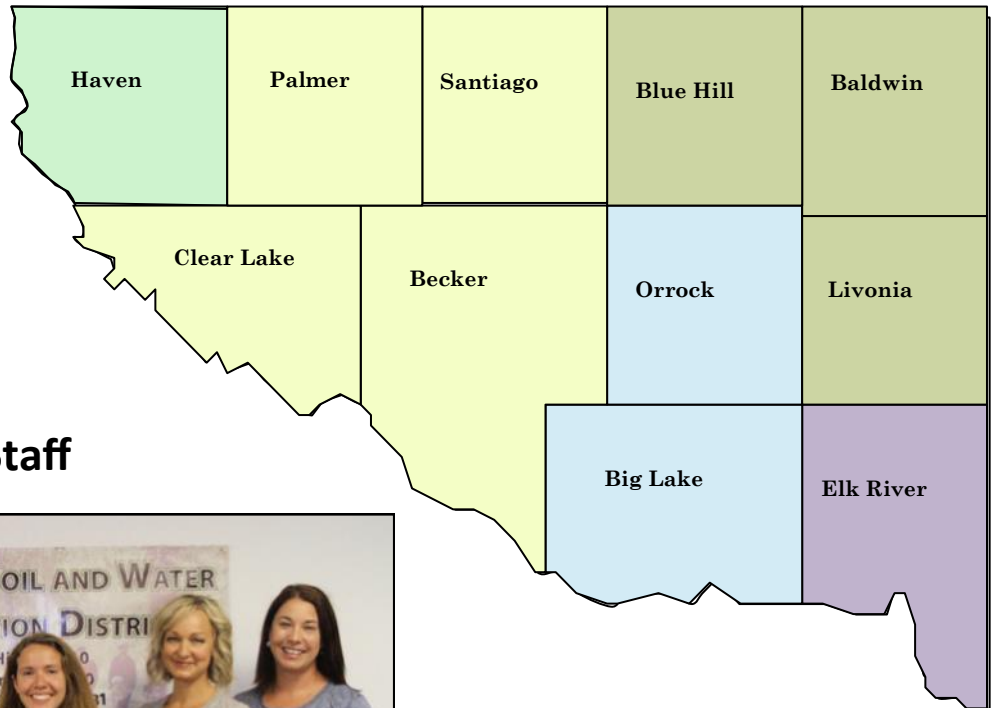
Larry Goenner  
Treasurer  
District III



Jason Selvog  
Chair  
District IV



Roger Nelson  
Reporter  
District V



## SWCD Staff



Bill Bronder, District Technician  
Gina Hugo, Resource Conservationist  
Francine Larson, District Manager  
Frances Gerde, District Technician  
Tiffany Determan, Water Resource Specialist  
Andie Bumgarner, Administrative/Marketing Assistant

# Sherburne SWCD Services



There are fees associated with some of the services we offer.  
Please contact our office for more information.

- Tree Planting
- Prairie Restoration/Planting
- Pasture Restoration/Planting
- Annual Tree Sale
- Forest Stewardship Plans
- Wetland Delineations
- Rotational Grazing Plans
- Pasture Management/Seeding Plans



Annual Tree Sale



Tree Planting



Cover Crop Demonstration



Citizen Pruner Event



# Forestry

## Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA) – Fall Family Forestry Field Day



In early 2015, the SWCD was asked to partner with the MFA and the Metro MFA Chapter to host a fall field day in the County. Early on, USDA NRCS also joined in the partnership. Peter and Debra Jensen of Baldwin Township, graciously offered to partner by extending their 300 acres property as the location and subject for the event. The Jensen’s active forest stewardship activities were highlighted throughout the event, attended by over 140 adults and 73 children. Attendees watched demonstrations of draft horse log skidding, vibratory plowing for oak wilt control, portable sawmill and solar kiln operations and “light-on-the-land” logging equipment. Exhibitors and speakers were on hand to promote and discuss healthy soils for productive forests, marketing and utilization of wood, woodland tax information and prairie restoration.



A woodland walk provided a guided tour of the land with stops to discuss wildlife monitoring and inventory methods, prairie restoration, reforestation and oak wilt. Families were delighted with the many children’s activities including Smokey Bear, the DNR fire truck and horse drawn wagon rides through beautiful wooded trails.



Farm Friends Barn outdid themselves with food service throughout the day. All proceeds raised went towards the youth agricultural education exhibit – which will be located in Becker.

The event was free to all who wanted to attend. The goal was to promote forest stewardship on private lands and connect woodland owners to the many resources available to assist them.

### Tree Health Consultations

Over 160 onsite consultations were conducted to assist landowners with management of tree diseases in urban landscapes and throughout wooded rural residential property. Oak Wilt and Bur Oak Blight were the most common diagnosis, followed closely by needle cast diseases of spruce and pine.



# Forestry



## Woodpecker Activity Survey

Researchers have found a strong correlation between heavy woodpecker activity in ash trees in late winter and presence of emerald ash borer (EAB) larvae. EAB is confirmed in the City of Shoreview, within 30 miles of Sherburne County Communities. Early detection is key to successful mitigation of the damaging effects of an infestation. To that end the SWCD has partnered with the MN Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the City of Elk River to conduct a volunteer survey that would look for signs of infestation – namely woodpecker activity in late March and early April.

The opportunity attracted 35 volunteers who attended a two hour training session taught by MDA staff. The SWCD coordinated the survey work and collected results. 44 parks were surveyed and all maintained ash trees received a visual assessment. Volunteers used binoculars to look for wood pecks, soughed off bark (also called “blonding”), bark spits and larval galleries. Any suspect trees were re-checked by SWCD staff. No EAB infestation were found in 2015. The survey will be repeated in 2016.



## Citizen Pruner Program

The SWCD continues to coordinate volunteer pruners for the cities of Becker, Big Lake, Elk River and Princeton through a partnership with the U of M Tree Care Advocate Program’s pilot Citizen Pruner Program. Last year marked the second season of engaging community members in effective tree care. Fifteen dedicated volunteers contributed 202 hours of their skilled time at 32 locations. Their diligent efforts combined totaled more than 7,450 cuts!

**Volunteers 21      Hours 94.5**



# Water Quality

## Briggs Lake Chain Community Partners Grant

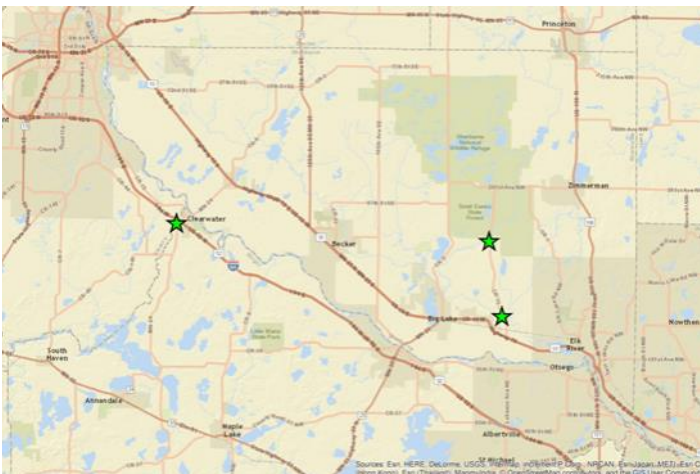
In 2014 the SWCD partnered with the Briggs Lake Chain Association to apply for a Clean Water Fund Grant. The purpose of receiving this grant was to reduce pollution from entering the lakes and to build the Lake Associations capacity to recommend conservation practices to their fellow lakeshore owners. Several Lake Association volunteers donated copious amounts of time to visit with landowners that have sites that would be suitable for a conservation practice. The SWCD can provide design assistance.

One project was installed in 2015 with a list of several more that are planned to be installed in the spring of 2016. The partnership with the Lake Association on this grant has been so successful that the SWCD will most likely have to apply for another similar grant to accommodate the ever growing list of interested landowners.



## Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN)

A Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) lead project that is designed to obtain long term water quality trends statewide. The MPCA utilizes local partners to collect water quality samples at specific monitoring sites. The Sherburne SWCD monitors 3 of these sites for the WPLMN project. Outside of the main goals for the project the data will be used to assist with impaired waters assessments, watershed and water quality studies and reports, watershed modeling efforts and measuring ongoing effectiveness of major watershed and restoration plans. Each site is sampled for total suspended solids (TSS), total suspended volatile solids (TSVS), Turbidity (water clarity), dissolved orthophosphate phosphorus (DOP), total phosphorus (TP), nitrate-nitrite nitrogen ( $\text{NO}_3+\text{NO}_2\text{-N}$ ), and total Kjeldahl nitrogen (TKN). Flow data is also collected at each site. The flow data and sample results are used to calculate pollutant loads. The calculation results in daily and annual pollutant load concentrations that can be used to determine whether a stream is in need of pollution reduction.





# Water Quality



## MAWQCP

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification is a voluntary program that provides the opportunity for farmers and landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices that protect our surface and ground water. Certified farmers are deemed to be compliant with any new water quality rules or regulations during their period (up to 10 years) of certification.

Certification is a three step process; application, assessment, and verification. The SWCD assists the farmer with the application and assessment. A licensed certifier completes the verification. The farm is then eligible for certification.

Why would a farmer want to become certified? This program helps to protect and improve the water quality in Sherburne County, provides regulatory certainty for the life of the certification, recognizes the conservation efforts being done by the farmer, and provides priority access to USDA/NRCS financial and technical assistance.

We have certified one farm as part of a training program and will be holding an open house in March 2016 to further promote this program.

## SWCD Monitoring

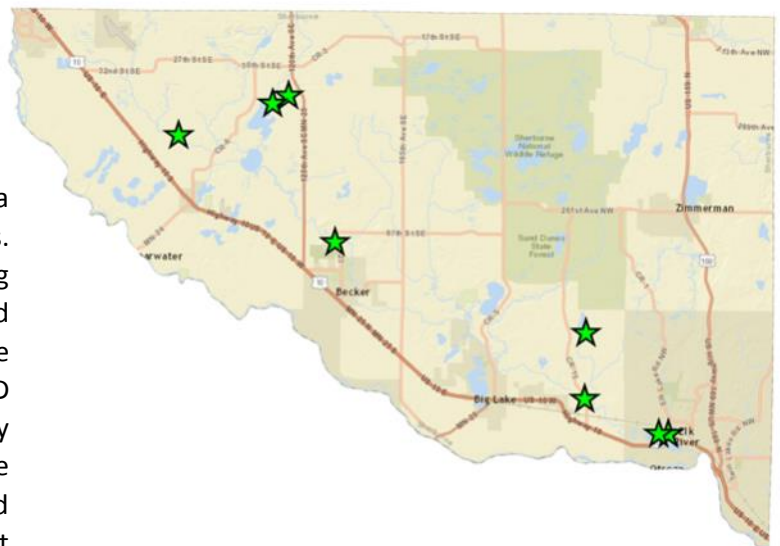
### Stream Monitoring Sites

**Flow Measurement: 6**

**Bacteria: 2**

**Phosphorus: 5**

In 2015 8 stream sites were monitored through a combination of field sampling and laboratory analysis. Water samples were analyzed for the following parameters: Total Phosphorus, Total Suspended Solids, Dissolved Orthophosphate, and E.coli. The type of parameters vary at each site. The SWCD continued to build our stream monitoring data by adding two new sites at Lake Orono inflows. The lake Orono sites are in conjunction with a subwatershed assessment that finds targeted locations that are best suited for stormwater management projects. Two sites were also added to test water quality at Briggs Creek and Julia Creek.





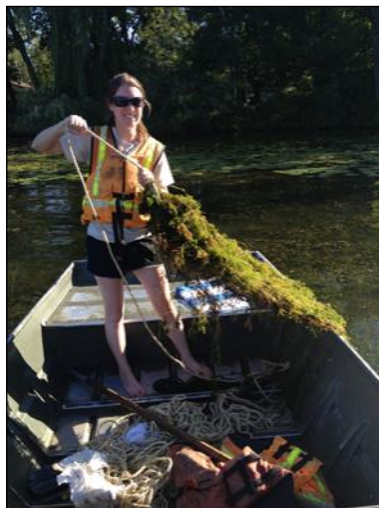
# Water Quality

## Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan

In early 2015 the SWCD formed an AIS task force to develop the AIS Prevention and Management Plan. The task force met 3 times between January and May of 2015 to discuss priority concerns for the County. The task force narrowed it down to 4 main categories where funding and time will be focused. These categories are Public Awareness and Education, Early Detection and Rapid Response, Inspections and Enforcement, and Special Projects. With those 4 categories the SWCD was able to write up a Management Plan that was approved by the County Board of Commissioners in July of 2015. Below is a chart of the 2015 accomplishments that were a result of the Management Plan.



Public Awareness/ Education	Early Detection/ Rapid Response	Inspections/ Enforcement
CLIMB theater presentation at Twin Lakes Elementary for 2nd and 5th graders	Eurasian Watermilfoil surveys on Orono, Birch, Ann, Fremont, West Hunter, and Sandy Lakes	County Water Patrol conducted AIS inspections at 9 lakes, they found 81% compliance with AIS rules
Worked with Anoka Ramsey Community College to design new signage for public accesses	Created Zebra Mussel monitoring plan for volunteers, available summer of 2016	SWCD hired Water Guards to conduct random inspections focused on the east side of the County
Inventory of public access AIS signs		
Various News releases		
Partnered with Star Tribune to complete a geo-fence campaign		
Displays at public events (County Fair, Baldwin Fest, Palmer Day)		



# Projects on the Ground



## Cover Crop Demonstration Site

On November 3, the SWCD and the Natural Resources Conservation District sponsored the Third Annual Cover Crop Field Day as part of our joint soil health initiative. Cover crops improve soil health by controlling erosion, building soil structure, improving soil fertility, improving water infiltration, reducing compaction, and increasing organic matter in the soil.

The Field Day was held on the Diamond A Farms near St. Cloud. In addition to a six species mix and an eight species mix, we were also able to evaluate three new individual cover crop species to see if they would be appropriate for our area. The new species were lentils, kale, and Sunn hemp. We also looked at planting date and we measured the above ground bio-mass produced.



Landowner Lynn Ayers showing cover crop radishes.

## Results of Above Ground Bio-Mass Sampling

Cover Crop	Estimated Dry Weight lbs. /acres	Plant Date	Weigh Date
Spring Rye	6835	8/13/2015	10/14/2015
8 Species Mix (Barley, Kale, Lentil, Crimson Clover, Phacelia, Peas, Radish, Turnips)	8575	8/26/2015	10/14/2015
6 Species Mix (Oats, Radish, Sunn Hemp, kale, Crimson Clover, Peas)	8137	8/26/2015	10/14/2015
Kale	4550	8/26/2015	10/14/2015
Lentil	1050	8/26/2015	10/14/2015
Triple J Farms (Spring Rye, Radish, Lentil, Turnip, Sunn Hemp, Kale)	2975	8/13/2015	10/14/2015



Cover crops can add substantial amounts of organic matter to the soil.



Planting the 2015 cover crop demo site.



# Projects On The Ground

## Pasture Management Program



**Good Pasture Management**



**Poor Pasture Management**

In 2014 the District received a Clean Water Fund grant totaling \$60,000. The funds are being utilized to implement a pasture and manure management program which provides technical and financial assistance to small farm owners; most closely focused on those within priority locations as identified in the Elk River Bacteria TMDL and WRAPS reports. In 2015, staff met with 2 landowners within the priority area and 2 outside those boundaries. The ultimate goal is to saturate the area with bacteria reduction best practices such as pasture renovation/management, riparian buffer strips, clean water diversions, vegetated buffer strips, and manure management; including composting structures.

## Land Resource Inventory

On a rainy day in September, Tom Gervais-Grazing Specialist and Mike Walczynski-Area Soil Scientist sample a pasture as part of NRCS's National Resource Inventory (NRI). Since 1977, the NRI has surveyed land use and natural resource conditions and trends on non-Federal lands. This year, one of the sample sites was located on a farm in Blue Hill Township. With the landowner's permission, Tom and Mike are recording the soil condition, vegetation type, and bio-mass at the sample site.



## Improving Soil Health

Utilizing both the Clean Water Fund grant and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Sustainable Ag grant, the SWCD will continue working with local farmers on improving soil health through activities such as soil analysis, data collection from moisture probes and planting cover crop demonstration plots.



Soil health can be defined as maintaining and improving the soil's capacity to function. It is important to understand that it is the interaction of the physical, chemical, and biological properties of the soil that determines the soil's health. We can measure and farm in ways that improve the health of the soil. A healthy soil means increased production with fewer inputs and improved water quality.

# Completed Projects

## County Fair Raingarden

The SWCD wanted to establish more of a long term booth at the County Fair. In hopes of drawing in those unaware of conservation practices they decided to install a fully functioning raingarden equipped with a rain barrel to water a small shade garden under the awning. Both the raingarden and shade garden are planted with flowers, grasses and sedges that are native to Sherburne County. The SWCD wanted to demonstrate how native plants can easily be used in more formal landscapes and break the myth that native plants look “weedy”. The raingarden was installed by hand by the SWCD staff.



June 2015

Project Details	Project Partners
Date Installed: June, 2015	Sherburne SWCD
Area: 70 ft <sup>2</sup>	
Number of Plants: 44	



August 2015

## Forrest Brothen – Stormwater Reduction Project

Forrest lives on Lake Julia and has already been proactive on his property by installing a shoreline buffer with the help of the lake association. He noticed an excess amount of runoff coming from his front yard near the road. The runoff from the road, his roof, and compacted lawn was causing erosion problems on the side of his yard leading to the lake. To combat the issue with assistance from the SWCD he had gutters installed that were directly connected to two buried French drains that will allow most of his roof runoff to infiltrate into the ground. He also replaced most of his front yard which had pretty sparse turf grass with shade tolerant native plants that will develop deep roots perfect for infiltrating excess runoff. Lastly he replaced his walking path with pervious pavers that will also aid in runoff control.



July 2015

Project Details	Project Funding	Project Partners
Date Installed: August, 2015	2014 Clean Water Funds: \$11,191.00	Sherburne SWCD
Area: 1,200 ft <sup>2</sup>	Landowner: \$1,509.00	Landowner
Number of Plants: 282	Total Project Cost: \$12,700.00	Briggs Lake Chain Association



August 2015

# Completed Projects

## Deb Svendsen – Dry Creek Bed

Deb Svendsen has a raingarden to collect runoff that comes from her roof and other parts of her property. The garden captures and filters the water before it can reach Ann Lake. She started noticing that after the raingarden installation not all of the water that could be infiltrated was being intercepted. She contacted the SWCD looking for ways to remedy this. Together the SWCD and Svendsen came up with the idea of a dry creek bed to divert all of her roof runoff to the raingarden. A dry creek bed is a way to direct water without causing serious erosion issues, especially on a slope like Svendsens property. Svendsen installed the entire project from start to finish, which included moving a large amount of heavy boulders!



July 2014

Project Details	Project Funding	Project Partners
Date Installed: September, 2015	2015 State Cost Share: \$578.38	Sherburne SWCD
Area: 240 ft <sup>2</sup>	Landowner: \$450.00	Landowner
Number of Plants: 21	Total Project Cost: \$1,028.38	



October 2015

## Ken Day / Monica Peters – Shoreland Buffer

Ken and Monica were interested in improving wildlife and pollinator habitat on their lakeshore property. Before project installation the main vegetation cover along their shore was reed canary grass, which is an invasive species that provides little benefit to wildlife. They replaced the reed canary grass along the shore with a wide variety of native grasses, flowers, and sedges. They also removed a large portion of upland turf grass and replaced it with the native plants, which will reduce runoff, hold the soil and provide food and habitat for a variety of wildlife species. A mixture of live plant plugs and seed was used to maximize the space that could be converted.



Before

Project Details	Project Funding	Project Partners
Date Installed: June, 2015	2014 Clean Water funds: \$3,061.57	Sherburne SWCD
Area: 3,780ft <sup>2</sup>	Landowner: \$1,848.73	Landowner
Number of Plants: 146	Total Project Cost: \$4,910.30	




After

# Completed Projects

## St. Cloud – Raingarden Project

In 2011 the City of St. Cloud and the Sherburne SWCD partnered for the installation of 20 raingardens. This project was so successful and drew so much interest from the neighborhood that additional funding was received and landowners were approached to have a raingarden installed during the summer of 2015. Each raingarden project will reduce phosphorus loading by an estimated: 8 lbs/year of total suspended solids and 900 lbs/year and total stormwater runoff.




Project Details	Project Funding	Project Partners
Date Installed: October, 2015	2013 Clean Water funds: \$12,679.34	Sherburne SWCD
Area: 356ft <sup>2</sup>	Landowner: \$1,039.20	Landowner
Number of Plants: 118	Total Project Cost: \$13,718.52	MCD-NPEAP 

## Clear Lake Township – Stormwater Reduction Project

The Clear Lake Township easement on Long Lake had long been known for contributing large amounts of stormwater runoff in early spring before crops are up, with the runoff comes sediment riddled with pollutants. Long Lake is a high priority lake and is not yet on the States Impaired Waters List. A design was planned by the township engineer, which consisted of three dry swale basins with check dams. The dry swales will slow the runoff and allow the sediment to filter out and the water to infiltrate into the ground.



Project Details	Project Funding	Project Partners
Date Installed : May, 2015	2014/2015 State Cost Share: \$5,856.83	Sherburne SWCD
Area: 8,712 ft <sup>2</sup>	Clear Lake Township: \$3,632.67	Clear Lake Township
	Total Project Cost: \$9,489.50	MCD-NPEAP 



# 2015 Buffer Law

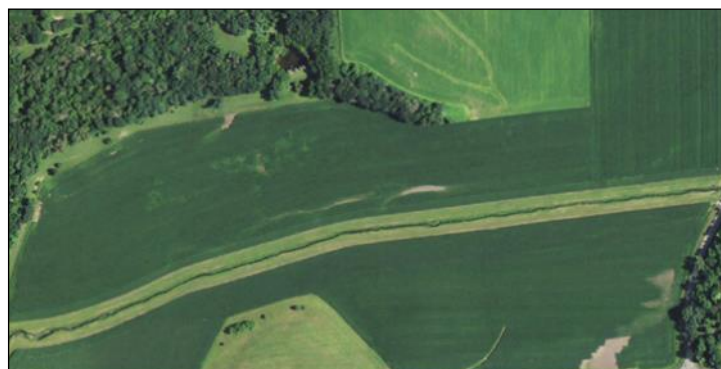
## 2015 Buffer Law

2015 saw the passage of Governor Dayton's Buffer Law. This legislation requires the establishment of permanent vegetative buffer strips along DNR listed public waters with shoreline classifications and public drainage systems (county ditches). For the public waters, the buffers are required to be an average of 50' wide with a minimum width of 30'. For public drainage systems, the width is 16.5'. The Soil and Water Conservation Districts are to provide technical assistance to landowners.

Why buffers? Vegetated buffers help filter out suspended solids, phosphorous, and nitrogen from runoff. They provided wildlife food and nesting cover, and bank stability. Stable banks mean less maintenance costs.

The public waters buffers have to be in place by November 1, 2017. The DNR is presently in the process of mapping these waters. The maps can be viewed at <http://arcgis.dnr.state.mn.us./gis/buffviewer>. They are also taking comments from the general public regarding these maps.

Regarding the public ditch systems, the District has been working closely with the Sherburne County Zoning, Ditch Inspector, and the Mapping Department. Using 2015 aerial photography and the County Ditch maps, we have measured the areas along the ditches that are presently in compliance with the Buffer Law, out of compliance, and those that need field verification. The buffers along public drainage systems have to be in place by November 1, 2018. The District is developing additional programs to help landowners with establishing permanent vegetative covers.



## Wetland Conservation Act

In 2015, the District completed 23 wetland delineations. This included 6 delineations for County road projects, 2 for Township road projects, and 2 on public parks. The District also wrote 4 Restoration Orders for activities in wetlands that were in violation of the Wetland Conservation Act.



# Education and Outreach



Conservation education is important to teach people of all ages, in both rural and urban areas, to appreciate the country's natural resources and learn to conserve those resources for future generations. Through conservation education, people develop the skills necessary to understand the complexities of natural resource problems.

## **Briggs Lake Chain**

The SWCD has a long-standing partnership with the Briggs Lake Chain Association which has included participating in a workshop each spring to educate the interested residents about different types of restoration projects, plants, strategies, and grants to help protect the lakes and area wildlife.



## **Climb Theater AIS Presentation**

In an effort to educate our youth about the threat aquatic invasive species pose to our lakes. The SWCD partnered with CLIMB Theater to develop an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) lesson for 2nd and 5th graders. The topic of AIS is getting more popular ever since the State of Minnesota delegated funding to each county for the sole purpose of developing an AIS Prevention and Management plan. The Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District recognizes the importance of education in preventing the spread of AIS.

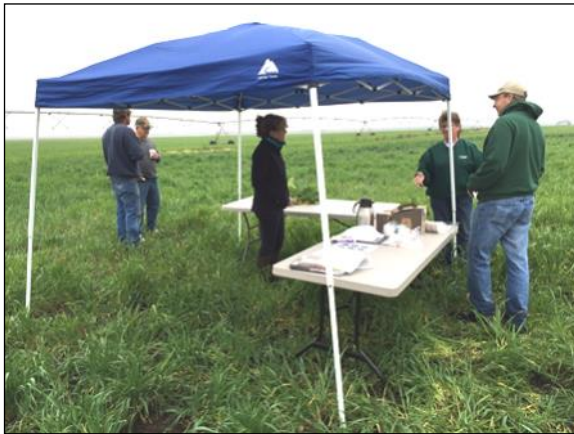
## **Volunteer Appreciation Dinner**

Sherburne SWCD held its biannual Conservation Volunteer Appreciation Dinner November 5th at the Elk River Lions Park Center. This event is the SWCD's chance to recognize the contributions and assistance volunteers have provided to the District. The evening's program included the honoring of the 2015 Outstanding Conservation Cooperator Duane and Alan Peterson, Keynote speaker Eric North's presentation on "The year in a life of a tree" and music by Ryan Fiskewold.





# Education and Outreach

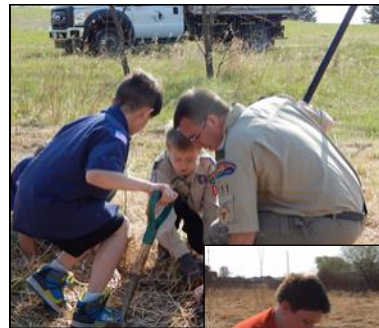


## **Cover Crop Demonstration Field Day**

District Technician Bill Bronder led a cover crop demonstration field day November 4th. The demonstration was held at Diamond A Farms in Haven Township. Attendees were able to view and compare first hand the benefits provided by the 6 species mix (crimson clover, kale, oats, peas, radish, sun hemp) and 8 species mix (barley, crimson clover, kale, lentil, peas, phacelia, radish, turnips). These benefits include erosion control, improving soil and water quality, reducing weeds and soil compaction, and recycling nutrients. This event was hosted by both the SWCD and NRCS.

## **Cub Scout Tree Planting**

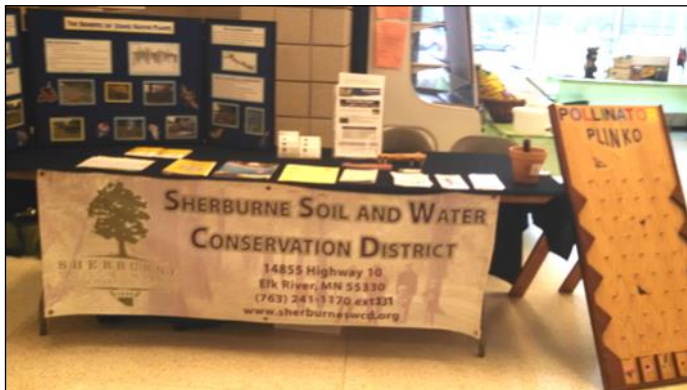
2015 marks the 7th consecutive year that Elk River Area Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts have stepped up to plant trees on park property. 53 children and adults attended the event. The morning was filled with teaching, mentoring and empowering between adults and youth and between older scouts and younger scouts. Teams of children hauled buckets of water to newly planted trees while even more teams delivered wheelbarrows of mulch to encircle each seedling. Over 450 trees were planted, mulched and watered in a matter of 2 1/2 hours at Elk River's Meadowvale Heights Park.



## **Environmental Education Days**

The Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge hosted the annual Environmental Education Days on September 16-17th. The Sherburne SWCD presented information at the groundwater and watershed models for the event.

# Education and Outreach



## Garden Education Expo

The SWCD Staff represented the SWCD at the 11th Annual Garden Education Expo in Big Lake on Saturday April 11th. The staff fielded questions throughout the day on native plants and pollinators. They also handed out information on services provided by the SWCD. Sherburne SWCD has been a presence at the expo for several years.

## Sherburne County Fair

The Sherburne SWCD has a display and information booth each year during the Sherburne County Fair. The SWCD booth is located at the corner of the Commercial building.

During the fair, staff is on hand to answer questions and provide information on the programs and technical assistance the SWCD can provide. This year the SWCD participated in Childcare day at the fair and children were invited to stop by the booth, check out the newly installed raingarden and test their luck at pollinator plinko.



## Nitrate Clinic

Thursday March 19th the SWCD held a water testing Nitrate Clinic for the public. Residents were asked to bring in cold water samples from their home. The sample was tested and participants were immediately counseled on the results. High levels of nitrate in drinking water can be dangerous to health, especially for infants and pregnant women. SWCD Nitrate Clinic's are held on a biannual basis. These Clinic's are well received by the public, because they provide instant feedback about the quality of water the residents have running into their homes.



# Education and Outreach



## Prairie Training Day

On May 21st, over 40 SWCD technical staff attended a Native Prairie Seeding and Management Training hosted by the Sherburne SWCD. This training was offered to SWCD Technical Staff that work with landowners on establishing native prairie. “This training gives technical staff a hands on experience of what and how native seeding equipment is used and how this information can be relayed to landowners they are working with,” said Jason Selvog, Stearns County SWCD. Professionals from Sherburne & Stearns SWCD’s, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Prairie Restorations and MN Native Landscapes were on hand to present information and answer questions.

## Small Farms Conference

A small farms day conference was held in early March at the Sherburne History Center. Four different speakers gave presentations on Cost Share programs for small acreage, Livestock health care, and pasture management. The well attended event was also set up as a networking event for the owners of small farms. The SWCD partnered with U of M Extension, Minnesota Horse Council, and Anoka Equine to help make the conference a success.



## Baldwin Fun Fest

This is the 2nd year the SWCD has had a booth at the Baldwin FunFest in Young Park. Staff provided information on available SWCD services and programs. Children of all ages were also encouraged to play a game of Pollinator Plinko. A newly installed raingarden at the park was on display for all to enjoy throughout the day. The raingarden was designed and installed by the SWCD with coordinated efforts from volunteers.

# Various SWCD Programs



## 2015 Tree Sale

In 2015 over 20,000 trees were sold during the SWCD's annual tree sale. This sale was one of the most successful on record. The tree sale is an important annual program that runs between January 1 and mid April. The sale originated in order to provide landowners with an affordable and convenient way to purchase trees and shrubs for conservation practices, such as windbreaks, shelterbelts, living snowfences, scenic buffers, wildlife habitat, and more.



## Conservation Corps Intern

For the fifth year in a row the SWCD has been fortunate enough to receive a Minnesota Conservation Corps apprentice to assist with various SWCD programs. This summer our apprentice was Drew Chirpich. Drew is a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota Duluth with a degree in Environmental Studies and a minor in Art. He assisted with an MDA Sustainable Agriculture Grant that is researching the use of cover crops to improve soil health and prevent nitrogen loss to the groundwater. He also assisted with buckthorn control at the Bridgeview County park, water monitoring, and the Aquatic Invasive Species Program. At the end of his apprenticeship, Drew was hired by the Wabasha SWCD as a District Technician.

## Minnesota GreenCorps Member

In 2015 Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) was selected to Host a MN GreenCorps Member. Samuel Edwards was chosen as the Sherburne County Green Corps Member. Samuel recently graduated from St Cloud State University with a degree in Environmental Studies. He joined the Minnesota GreenCorps after finishing his undergraduate work to gain valuable experience in his field of study. His term of service will run from September of 2015 to August of 2016. During this time Samuel will be working closely with SWCD Resource Conservationist Gina Hugo on forestry related programs; including: My Neighborhood Trees Program, the Citizen Pruner Program and a public tree inventory for the City of Elk River.

Minnesota GreenCorps is an AmeriCorps program that is a statewide initiative, to help preserve and protect Minnesota's environment while training a new generation of environmental professionals. The program is coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.





# 2015 Conservation Cooperator

## Peterson & Peterson LLC

Duane and Alan Peterson operate a 280 acre cash grain and beef farm in Becker Township. The Petersons have farmed for 25 years and the farm has been in the family since 1970. Recognizing the vulnerable groundwater in the excessively drained soils of the Anoka Sandplain Region, Duane and Alan converted from high to low pressure irrigation. To further improve efficiency and decrease potential nutrient leaching to groundwater the Peterson's have added soil moisture probes to have access to real time soil moisture. The Peterson's apply Nitrogen through the irrigation system, and are continually improving covercrop mixes to reduce erosion and breakup compaction. Petersons are conservation minded producers that deserve to be commended for their conservation efforts.



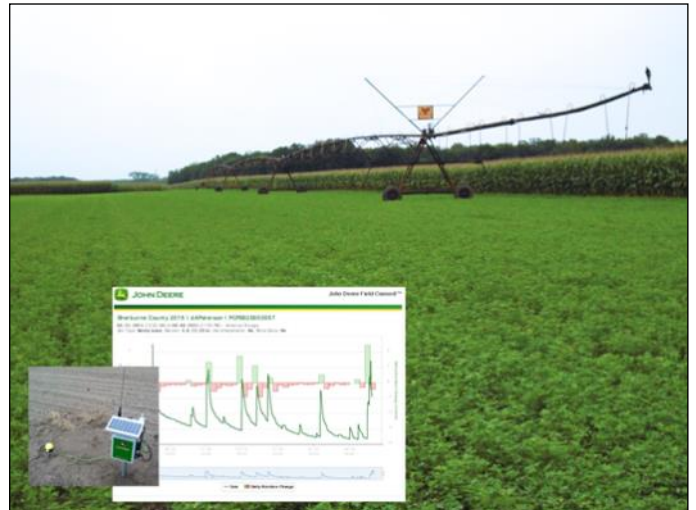
Duane and Alan Peterson



Receiving 2015 Conservation Cooperator award



Soil moisture probe installation



Irrigation System

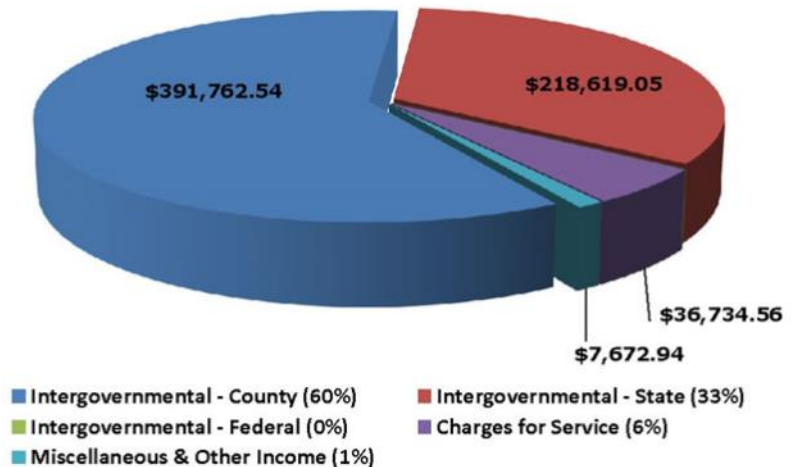
# 2015 Financial Summary



The Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District finances its day-to-day operations through a variety of revenue sources.

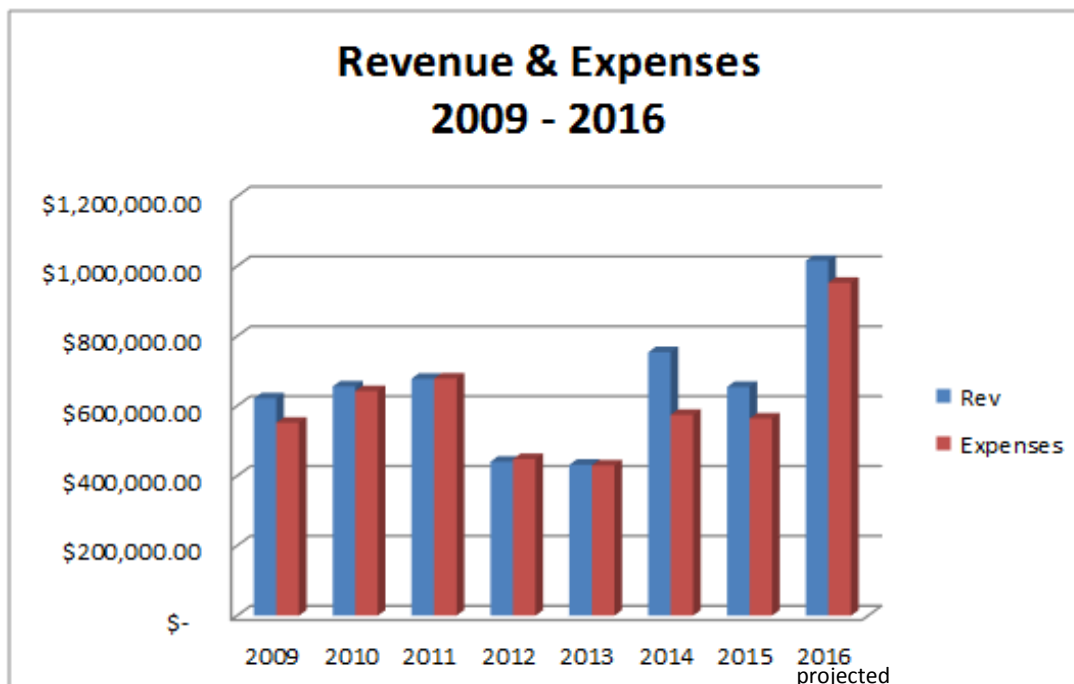
These sources include County Allocation (60%), State Grants (33%), charges for Services (6%), and other Miscellaneous Income (1%). Although governed by an elected board of officials, Conservation Districts do not have levy authority and must secure funds from many sources to maintain programs and services.

**Sherburne SWCD - Revenue Summary**  
**Total Revenue in 2015 was \$654,789.09**



**Note: Intergovernmental - County includes State Pass-through revenues.**

Sherburne SWCD's expenditures include personnel & operating expenses, District, State and Federal program expenses, and other related expenses.





# USDA / NRCS 2015 Highlights

## NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) getting conservation on the ground in 2015

CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) 4032 acres enrolled with a payment of \$42,881

EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) 532 contract acres with \$56,532 obligated

CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) technical assistance on 206 acres

Conservation plans written for 654 acres, conservation applied to improve soil & water quality on 769 acres, conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat on 463 acres, and conservation applied to improve environmental quality on 812 acres



Mary Monte  
NRCS District Conservationist



Miranda Wagner  
NRCS Soil Conservation Technician



Erosion Control project



Women Caring for the  
Land Workshop



An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



# USDA / NRCS 2015 Highlights

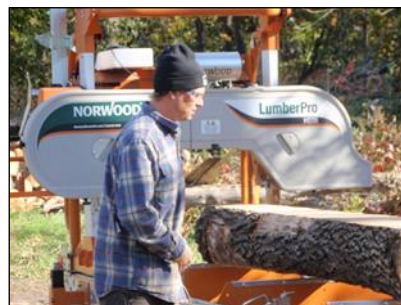


**NRCS works with partners to leverage additional conservation assistance for agricultural producers and landowners in priority conservation areas.**



Honey Bee Pollinator Initiative

**NRCS offers financial and technical assistance to help agricultural producers make and maintain conservation improvements on their land.**



Fall Family Forestry Event



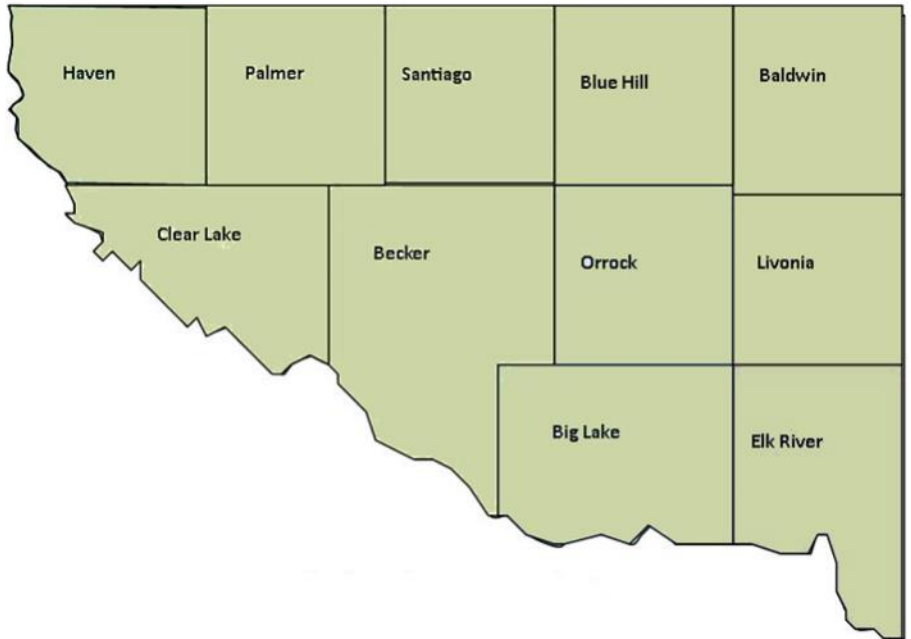
**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**



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# Sherburne County Information



**Total Land Area:** 451 Square Miles  
**Total Water Area:** 11,520 Acres  
**Lakes:** 127  
**Rivers and Tributaries:** 493 Miles  
**Population:** 91,126 \*U.S. Decennial Census  
**Native Vegetation:** Oak Savanna  
 Wet Soils/Water  
 Conifer Forests

## Cities

Becker  
 Big Lake  
 Clear Lake  
 Elk River (county seat)  
 Princeton  
 (partly in Mille Lacs County)  
 St. Cloud  
 (partly in Stearns County)  
 Zimmerman

## Townships

Baldwin Township  
 Becker Township  
 Big Lake Township  
 Blue Hill Township  
 Clear Lake Township  
 Haven Township  
 Livonia Township  
 Orrock Township  
 Palmer Township  
 Santiago Township





## **Our Mission**

The Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District is dedicated to working directly with landowners and agencies in order to promote the wise and sustainable use of our land and water related resources; to educate and inform the public about these uses; to help solve the resource problems within the District and to serve as a county wide natural resource information referral center.



Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District  
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Elk River, MN 55330  
(763) 241-1170 Ext. 4  
[www.sherburneswcd.org](http://www.sherburneswcd.org)