

Nature Talks

Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District

Nature Talks

May 2018

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SHERBURNE
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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2018 Tree Sale... It's a Wrap!



The staff at Sherburne County Soil & Water Conservation Districts have a strong belief in the power of trees. Trees have so many benefits; they filter water, prevent erosion, grow food, offer wildlife habitat, provide shade in the summer and keep us warm in the winter with firewood.

For decades the Sherburne SWCD has been providing high quality bare root tree seedlings and transplants to landowners

at a price that makes it feasible to plant multiple row windbreaks, living snowfences, privacy screens or wildlife plantings. affordable, easy, and good for you.

Each Spring our staff spends time sorting, prepping and bundling around 300 orders for the tree sale. This year over 22,000 trees were distributed in Sherburne County. Orders for the 2019 Tree Sale will be accepted on January 1st.

If tree planting is all new to you contact us, our staff is here help you select varieties to meet your objectives and can assist with resources on planting methods and tree protection.

For more information on the Tree Sale or tree planting, please contact our office at 763-241-1170 x 4.

Thank You

to everyone who participated in the SWCD 2018 Tree Sale



Over 22,000 tree seedlings were distributed

They will grow to add beauty and environmental benefits to Sherburne County!



COLA Kick-Off Event & Fundraiser

COLA Kick-Off Event & Fundraiser

Thursday, May 31st

6-8 pm

Lions Community Park

21960 Co Road 5, Big Lake, MN 55309



The Sherburne County COLA (Coalition Of Lake Associations) is hosting a kick-off event and fundraiser Thursday, May 31st. The event will include a youth speaker, lake resource experts, silent auction and free picnic dinner with ice cream bar. All are welcome to attend and have a good time while showing support for Sherburne County's lake, rivers and streams.

RSVP by email to sherburnecola@gmail.com or 763-567-5376.

Small Farms Night

The Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District hosted a Small Farms Night in partnership with the U of M Extension on April 3rd. Even with poor weather, 40 attendees came to listen to presentations covering manure composting, pasture management, local ordinances and cost share opportunities. Presenters included Sherburne and Benton District Staff, U of MN Extension and Sherburne County staff. In addition, two local farmers spoke about their operations and experiences. Dinner was provided by The Tipsy Chicken and was enjoyed by all. Small Farms was the kick event for a Clean Water Funds grant managed by the District to improve water quality in Elk River Watershed.

For more information on topics covered during Small Farms Night, please contact Miranda at 763-567-5370.



Cost Sharing Available for Small Farms



Sherburne SWCD offers several programs to assist landowners in reducing bacteria transport to the river.

Sherburne SWCD staff have the experience to help you address all your small farm or hobby farm needs! Site visits and consultations are completed free of charge, as are many technical designs.

Through a grant provided by the State Minnesota's Clean Water & Legacy Amendment, the Sherburne SWCD can now provide up to 75% financial assistance towards projects located in Priority Zones near the Elk River, as determined by recent studies.

Available Programs

Manure Management:

Proper manure management techniques include livestock fencing, composting bins/stalls or other manure storage facilities.

Buffer Strips:

Vegetated buffers may intercept or remove pollutants and sediment in the following percentages from runoff: 50% or more of nutrients and pesticides, 60% or more of some pathogens, and 75% or more of sediment. Deep rooted plants and wider corridors are more effective at protecting water quality and promoting groundwater recharge.

Pasture Management:

Livestock rotation plans, pasture plantings, and tilling plans all help to create healthy pastures that provide good nutrition, physically strengthen soils, and provides good vegetation to retain manure and nutrients during periods of heavy rain.

Stormwater Runoff:

Controlling the flow of water on your property is crucial for reducing bacteria transport and solving erosion problems. Stormwater runoff can be directed with vegetated plantings, French drains, rain gardens, constructed berms, or a variety of other solutions.

For more information please contact Miranda at 763-567-5370.



Conservation Corp Apprentice

Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District has once again been selected to host a Minnesota Conservation Corps apprentice to assist with various SWCD programs. This summer our apprentice is Will Anderson. Will recently graduated from Minnesota State University Mankato with a degree from the Parks and Leisure Services program for Resource Management. Will's term of service will run from May through August. During this time he will be working closely with all staff on everything from community tree inventories to water quality monitoring. Will comes to us from Delano, Minnesota. He has a passion for being outdoors and enjoys spending time camping or going on hikes.

Conservation Corps provides hands-on environmental stewardship and service learning opportunities to youth and young adults while accomplishing conservation, natural resource management and emergency response work.



Welcome to the SWCD Team, Will!

Ground Water Conservation



Saving Water and Money through Groundwater Conservation Groundwater is a precious resource for watering lawns, crop irrigation, industrial cooling, recharging our lakes and streams, and providing drinking water for us all. The relatively sandy soils in Sherburne County allow for quick infiltration of water into the soil, meaning groundwater reserves can replenish themselves quickly. Sherburne SWCD is participating in a Campus Groundwater Conservation Protocol development process, which aims to develop a protocol for measuring groundwater use on public campuses in the 11 county metro area and reducing use through conservation

measures. In summer of 2018, SWCD staff will be working with campus officials to conduct a water audit of a public campus. The process is designed to identify areas that public buildings can not only reduce water use, but also save money. Reducing groundwater consumption at home can save you money too!

Here are a few ways in which we recommend you save water at home:

1. When purchasing new appliances, buy ENERGY STAR certified and WaterSense labeled products.
2. Reduce consumption by taking shorter showers and turning off faucets while brushing your teeth, washing dishes or washing hands.
3. Inspect sinks and toilets for leaks; at one drip per second, a faucet can leak 3,000 gallons in a year. Replace as needed.
4. Set up a backyard rainwater collection system or install a rain barrel to collect rain water for lawn irrigation.
5. Replace turf-grass with low maintenance grass, ground cover flowers or other native turf species that are drought tolerant and require less watering and mowing.

Sherburne SWCD staff are available to assist county residents in water conservation practices such as rainwater collection systems or for alternative lawn cover. **Site visits and consultations are free of charge, contact our office at 763-241-1170 x 4.**



New Minnesota Firewood Rules

Campers and other visitors planning to have campfires at state parks, state forests and other public lands managed by the Minnesota DNR need to be aware of new firewood rules beginning this year. New rules were needed, because quarantine boundaries instituted for gypsy moth and emerald ash borer made the former rules problematic.



Firewood approved for use on DNR-managed lands includes:

- Firewood sold at the specific Minnesota state park or recreation area where it will be used.
- Non-ash firewood that was (1) purchased from a vendor and (2) harvested in the same county as the DNR unit where it will be used.
- Firewood that was (1) purchased from a vendor (2) harvested in Minnesota and (3) certified to be pest free
- Additional types of acceptable firewood listed at: www.mndnr.gov/firewood.

One thing to keep in mind is firewood sold at one MN state park or recreation area might not be approved for use at other MN state parks or Rec areas. Check with park staff to determine if any leftover firewood can be taken to any other campgrounds. Also check that the bundle label includes the county of harvest. If the wood is certified, the bundle label will also feature the logo of either the MN Department of Ag or the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Save the receipt, because it will be needed to show proof of purchase and labeled bundles to DNR staff upon request. Individuals bringing non-approved firewood onto DNR lands are subject to confiscation or fines. **For more information, visit www.mndnr.gov/firewood or contact the DNR Information Center by emailing info.dnr@state.mn.us or by calling 888-646-6367.**

Wildflower Seed Mixes

Minnesotans are eager to soak up the sun and get into their gardens to make the most of our short summers. Since many gardener's have heard of the decline in honey bees and other pollinators, flowering plants labeled for pollinators have been flying off the shelves. A relatively inexpensive way to cover a lot of ground with blooming plants is to buy the "wildflower in bag" mixes, this is usually promoted as pollinator friendly and easy to grow.

If we look more closely at the labels the plants found in those bags might not be the best for our area. Some wildflower seed mixes that are purchased at hardware stores and commercial garden centers are for nationwide distribution, this means the plants in them are most likely not native and some can actually be quite invasive if they escape the landscape setting. Conversely since we live in Minnesota with harsh winters, many of the species can't survive and will only last one year – requiring replanting the following year.



Minnesota is very fortunate to have a growing number of native plant nurseries and management companies that not only provide native seed and live plants but they also provide installation and maintenance services. They have knowledge on proper site preparation and plant selection, which are very important components when installing native plant habitat.

The Sherburne SWCD is always happy to help with questions about pollinator habitat and using native plants, feel free to give us a call at 763-241-1170 x 4 to request a site visit!

Join Becker's Community Tree Inventory Team

Do you love trees?

Have you always wanted to learn more about them?

Do you want to do something good for the environment?

In 2013, a Community Tree Survey was conducted in the City of Becker – this process looked at a sample of Becker's trees to get a good, relatively accurate idea of species composition. Becker has 17 parks and public building campuses that are all made more beautiful by the trees that grace their landscape. The SWCD is working with the Parks and Streets departments to inventory all public in your community to enable better tree care and prioritization.



Volunteers will receive professional training on tree identification, tree measurements and data collection. Volunteers will be provided all necessary inventory equipment. Volunteers will work when their schedule allows and will have the support of the SWCD staff.

A training will be held during the week of June 11. A date based will be based on participant availability. **If you are interested, please contact Gina at (763) 567-5360 or ghugo@sherburneswcd.org before June 6.** All interested participants will be polled on their preferred training date and select a day that works for the majority.

In Honor of **MEMORIAL DAY**

We will be closed on Monday, May 28

In honor of all our veterans as well as our active service members.

Thank you for all you do!

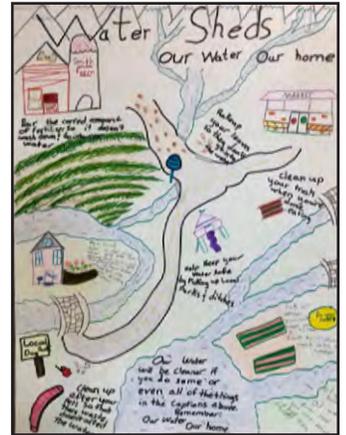
Wishing you a beautiful Memorial Day weekend!



4th Annual SWCD Poster Contest

The SWCD 2018 Poster Contest theme was “Watersheds, Our Water Our Home”. District technician Franny presented to schools in Elk River and Princeton on what makes up a watershed and how we can keep our water clean. She visited Princeton, Elk River, and Becker schools and reached over 300 students. The SWCD received 93 posters from the students, ranging from drawings to paintings, colored pencils to markers and glitter. The students did an excellent job showcasing what they learned from the presentations. During judging, posters were removed that did not meet the criteria. The decision to choose the top placing posters was a difficult one, the winners are shown below. All students who submitted posters will receive a small cone coupon from either Elk River or Princeton Dairy Queen for participating.

**1st Place Ella Kenmir
Princeton Intermediate
Mrs. Kluempke’s Class**



(L to R) District Technician Franny, 1st place winner Ella, District Manager Francine, Supervisor Nelson



**2nd Place Elanor Gruber
Princeton Intermediate Mr. Ruzek**



**3rd Place Ruthie Raske
Meadowvale Elementary Mrs. Hoff**



**4th Place Adriana Patullo
Meadowvale Elementary Mrs. Hoff**



Special thanks to Dairy Queen of Elk River and Princeton for donating ice cream coupons to all students who participated in the contest.

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