

*Becker Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
2011  
Annual Plan of  
Operations*



### ***PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT:***

**The purpose of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District is to develop and promote long range programs that satisfy the conservation needs of the people of the District. With rapidly expanding interests in resource development, it is essential that proper resource management be carried out in the District.**

**The programs will include, but not be limited to, proper treatment of each acre of land in Becker County in accordance with its needs. Emphasis will be placed on wind and water erosion and water quality protection practices. Implementation of the Local Water Plan will be administrated by the District as well as the 1991 Wetland Conservation Act.**

### ***INTRODUCTION:***

**In order to better serve the landowners and user in Becker County this Annual Work Plan is developed to establish a strategy under which the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District will operate during the next year in cooperation with its NRCS partners.**

### **OBJECTIVE #1**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE AND BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Continue memberships in the Minnesota Assn. of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD), Area I MASWCD, National Association of Conservation Districts and the Minnesota Association of County Ag Inspectors.
- Prepare and present District annual budget to the Becker County Commissioners.
- Prepare and submit year-end financial reports to appropriate agencies.
- Enter all required data into the eLink reporting system.
- Prepare District Annual Plan and place on web page.
- Prepare and distribute District Annual report and place on web page.
- Promote, and distribute the Becker County Atlas and Plat Book.
- Select a Becker County Conservationist of the Year and recognize them at the MASWCD State Conference in December.
- Attend the MASWCD State Conference in Bloomington in December.
- Keep Becker County Commissioners and State Legislators informed of District activities and needs through presentations, regular meetings, etc. Email them copies of District meeting minutes and agendas and extend an open invitation for them to attend our meetings.
- Inform partner agencies (watershed districts, etc.) that SWCD board meeting agendas and minutes will be posted on the SWCD web site.
- Represent the Becker SWCD on the local Becker County Ag Center FAC Committee.
- Monitor the status of the Rural Preserve Program as to what the legislative changes may be and how these changes may affect the SWCD role in the Rural Preserve Program.
- Apply for 2011 AgBMP Loan Program funds to provide low interest loans to landowners for the purpose of upgrading failing SSTS systems, purchase of reduced tillage equipment, erosion control measures, and ag waste systems and equipment.
- Prepare and submit the Natural Resources Block Grant for Becker County.
- Serve as host district and fiscal agent for the Red River Valley Conservation Service Area I Joint Powers Board for the Non-Point Engineering Assistance Program (NPEA)

### **OBJECTIVE #1 Con't.**

- Provide administrative and secretarial assistance to the NPEA engineering and technical staff as instructed by the District Board and the Red River Valley Conservation Service Area Joint Powers Board.
- Represent the RRVCSA on the state Conservation Technical Advisory Committee for the NPEA program as meetings are scheduled.
- Administer the Becker County Local Water Management Plan.

### **OBJECTIVE #2:**

#### **REDUCE WIND AND WATER EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION WITHIN CRITICAL AREAS OF BECKER COUNTY**

- Provide assistance to NRCS in the implementation of Federal programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), conservation compliance, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the implementation of the 2008 farm bill.
- Assist in development of CRP plans, application of CRP practices, and assist with compliance checks and future signups.
- For EQIP sign-ups priority consideration will be awarded for projects in the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District Stinking Lake Watershed, South Branch of the Wild Rice River in the Wild Rice River Watershed District, Campbell Creek Watershed and land within the Shoreland Regulation Zone.
- Establish 500 acres of no-till seeding through the District's no-till drill rental program.
- Reduce wind erosion through the installation of shelterbelts and field windbreaks.
- Carryout the District's tree program and provide technical assistance to Becker County residents to carrying out their tree planting needs.
- Maintain existing drainage systems and work with landowners to establish additional buffer strips to reduce sedimentation impacts into surface waters throughout Becker County.
- Keep the Buffalo-Red Watershed District, Wild Rice Watershed District, Pelican River Watershed District and the Cormorant Lakes Watershed District informed of conservation projects installed within their respective Districts that may require watershed permits, and keep them informed on how funds they may have provided were utilized for conservation measures.
- Assist in completing the 2008 Clean Water Legacy Grant in the Hay Creek watershed in cooperation with the Buffalo-Red Watershed District and NRCS to reduce erosion and sedimentation.
- Design and install 17 water and sediment erosion control structures in the Hay Creek Watershed as part of the 2011 Clean Water Legacy Grant funds received and EQIP funds to continue the erosion and sediment control efforts in Hay Creek Watershed.
- Continue efforts to establish native buffer strips in the Hay Creek watershed along priority drainage ditches and wetlands as part of the Hay Creek Project to reduce sedimentation into Stinking Lake.
- Carry out the provisions of the Native Buffer State Cost-share Program to establish native grass plantings in Becker County.

### **OBJECTIVE #3:**

#### **PROTECT BECKER COUNTY'S SURFACE WATER RESOURCES THROUGH EXISTING REGULATIONS, USE OF EXISTING PROGRAMS AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PROGRAMS.**

- Serve as the fiscal agent for the Big Toad Lake Associations Healthy Lakes and Rivers Partnership Grant.

### **OBJECTIVE #3 Con't.**

- Serve as fiscal agent for the Bad Medicine Lake Area Foundation for the Bad Medicine Lake Natural Shoreland Preservation Project upon receipt of a formal agreement from the Lake Association.
- Serve on the Detroit Lakes Environmental Technical Review Committee.
- Serve on the Detroit Lakes Transportation Planning Study Committee for the Highway 59 corridor west of Detroit Lakes.
- Serve on the Cormorant Lakes Watershed District Long Range Plan Committee.
- Carryout all administrative and technical responsibilities of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act by serving as the Local Government Unit for Becker County, including all cities.
- Provide assistance to townships on wetland impacts to meet the requirements of the Wetland Conservation Act when they upgrade township roads.
- Allow personnel to attend Wetland Conservation Act training as it becomes available.
- Maintain certification of District Tech. Ed Clem as a wetland delineator.
- Comment on DNR Public Water Permit applications when applicable.
- Continue to be a co-sponsor of the Pelican River Watershed Districts Upper Rice Lake Restoration Project in cooperation with the City of Detroit Lakes, and NRCS.
- Provide assistance to Detroit Township and the Pelican River Watershed District on the improvement of Anchor Road, if needed, as it pertains to the Wetland Conservation Act regulation.
- Serve on the Becker County Planning and Zoning TEP committee for reviewing development sites, tract splits etc: for the purpose of obtaining no net loss of wetlands.
- Assist in making wetland determinations for FSA and FACTA.
- Continue to participate in the rainfall monitoring program in cooperation with the Minnesota State Climatologist Office.
- Carryout the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, of MPCA-SWAG grant, #B38486 to monitor 3 lakes and the inlet to White Earth Lake in cooperation with Becker COLA and RMB Laboratories.
- Apply for a Lake Protection Water Plan Challenge Grant in cooperation with Becker COLA, and RMB Laboratories, and serve as fiscal agent for the grant.
- Educate residents on restoring and preserving natural shoreline and other sensitive areas and provide incentives to establish native grass buffers through the Native Buffer Cost-share Program.
- Work with interested landowners and lake shore owners on installing rain gardens and berms to treat runoff and reduce sediment and nutrient loading into surface water bodies.

### **OBJECTIVE #4:**

#### **PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE GROUND WATER QUALITY IN BECKER COUNTY**

- Carryout an abandoned well sealing cost-share program with CLWP and State Cost-share funds. Wells to be sealed will be selected on a priority basis.
- Conduct a well water testing clinic 2011 during the Becker County Fair.
- Monitor 7 wells in the Pelican River Sand Plains area and 20 wells in the Pineland Sand Plains area for static water levels and provide the information to the Minn. DNR Division of Waters.
- Continue to serve on the City of Detroit Lakes Wellhead Protection Plan Committee in 2011.
- Assist landowners in the proper closure of unused animal waste facilities and inform them of funding assistance that may be available through the Federal EQIP program or the State Cost-share program.

### **OBJECTIVE #5:**

#### **PROMOTE WILDLIFE HABITAT DEVELOPMENT IN BECKER COUNTY**

- Promote wildlife habitat development practices through the Conservation Reserve Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)

#### **OBJECTIVE #5 Con't.**

- Prepare WHIP contracts and plans as funds become available. (NRCS)
- Identify wildlife habitat needs through conservation planning.
- Cooperate with Ducks Unlimited and the Minnesota Waterfowl Association in carrying out the Wetland Reserve Program and provide referrals of interested landowners.
- Assist landowners with Wetland Conservation Act requirements to install wildlife dugouts or wetland restorations.
- Assist with the administration of the RIM/WRP program as needed.

#### **OBJECTIVE #6:**

##### **CARRYOUT A BALANCED EDUCATIONAL AND PROMOTIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE DISTRICT**

- Continue to upgrade the contents of the SWCD web page to keep the public informed of District programs and activities.
- Sponsor and organize a conservation field tour for all area school 5<sup>th</sup> graders in cooperation with other resources agencies and private volunteers.
- Have an educational station at the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Days at Cormorant Lakes Sportsman's Club.
- Participate in and co-sponsor the Ag-in-the Classroom Program for area 4<sup>th</sup> graders in March, in Detroit Lakes, and Frazee.
- Have an SWCD booth at the Becker County Fair.
- Appear regularly on the KDLM Radio Hodge-Podge Program to keep the public informed of District and NRCS activities and programs.
- Provide conservation news articles for 12 issues of County Line via DLOnline.
- Provide local media with timely articles on District activities.
- Contact area schools and encourage them to take part in the Envirothon program.
- Provide funds to the Area I Senior and Junior Envirothon Programs and serve on the area planning committee and State Planning committee when the state event is held in our area.

#### **OBJECTIVE #7:**

##### **ADMINISTER AND CARRYOUT THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BECKER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL INSPECTOR PROGRAM IN 2011**

- Hold the Annual Township/County Weed Inspectors meeting and publish the General Weed Notice by May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Conduct 12 seed dealer inspections.
- Attend bi-monthly District Ag Inspectors meetings.
- Attend the Annual Summer Ag Inspectors Conference.
- Attend quarterly MACAI Board meetings as representative for Dist. #1.
- Conduct testing for commercial and non-commercial pesticide applicators as requested.
- Continue to maintain existing and develop new bio-control sites in Becker County for the control of leafy spurge and spotted knapweed.
- Keep Becker County Commissioners and SWCD Supervisors informed of the Ag Inspector Program activities through timely reports.
- Continue to review and update the Cooperative Weed Management Area Plan as needed and directed by the Steering Committee.
- Carryout weed inspections and follow-up in cooperation with township officials.
- Complete phase two of the PTI invasive species program with funding from the 2007-08 Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant.
- Conduct two PTI Committee Meetings to provide direction for the invasive species control program.

### **OBJECTIVE #7 Con't.**

- Treat 500 acres and 100 miles of road right-of-way for invasive species in 2011.
- Keep Ag Inspector Program web page updated regularly, and add a Plant Watch List.
- Inspect gravel pits in Becker County to prevent the spread of noxious & invasive plants.
- Continue the 7 year certification program for gravel pits and transporting of fill material for the purpose of noxious weed control.
- Work with gravel pits on reclamation plans and seeding reclaimed areas through the Native Buffer Cost-share Program.
- Write another PTI Grant for a new type of invasive species project.
- Contact nursery's and box stores on new invasive trees and shrubs.

### **OBJECTIVE #8:**

#### **STATE COST SHARE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

- High Priority Erosion Problems – Areas where erosion from wind or water is occurring on Class I-IV soils equal to or in excess of 2 x T tons per acre per year, or any within 300 feet of a water course or within 1,000 feet of a water basin, wetland, or water course.
- In 2011 high priority will be given to reducing water erosion and sedimentation in the Hay Creek Watershed, Campbell Creek and the South Branch of the Wild Rice River areas. The Becker SWCD will authorize up to 20% of its state cost-share allocation to address water erosion and sedimentation problems in these areas.
- High Priority Sedimentation – Areas within 300 feet of a water course or within 1,000 feet of a water basin or wetland where the water erosion rate exceeds three tons per acre per year or areas where the District can show that sediment delivery occurs from a watershed or direct conveyance structure such as a storm sewer or paved outlet channel discharging to these waters.
- State cost-share funds will be used to install a variety of conservation measures, such as but not limited to grassed waterways, erosion and sediment control basins, field windbreaks, shelterbelts, wildlife habitat, buffer strips, critical area stabilization, and shore land and roadside protection.
- Conduct state cost-share site inspections on all state cost-share contracts completed in 2010 and conduct the second site visit for projects completed in 2006.
- Promote the State Cost-share Program through the use of newspaper articles and radio announcements.
- Update the TAA job approval authority for SWCD staff in cooperation with NRCS as needed.

### **OBJECTIVE #9:**

#### **BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER IN WESMIN RC&D**

- Keep informed of resource needs and projects that will benefit Becker County and submit requests for assistance to WesMin RC&D.
- Continue to support WesMin's efforts in establishing dry fire hydrants in cooperation with area fire departments.

### **OBJECTIVE #10:**

#### **OTHER SWCD AND PARTNER PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Work with producers, through the NRCS grazing specialist, to improve pasture management.
- Promote wildlife practices through the CRP Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP).
- Carryout the Wetland Reserve Program in cooperation with Ducks Unlimited and Minnesota Waterfowl Association.

- Annually review compliance on existing RIM easements and file with BWSR
- Make soils information available to landowners, operators, realtors, appraisers as requested.
- Forestry – Work with area foresters on CRP and other tree planting programs.
- Serve on the Becker County Planning and Zoning Technical Review Committee for development site review and the County Ordinance Review Committee.
- Check easements, granted to Becker County on approved plats, for compliance.
- Continue to be active in the Otter Tail Watershed Group and implement the Ottertail Watershed Plan as program and project opportunities arise.
- Work with other Local, State, and Federal agencies to meet other plan objectives that may arise.

**OBJECTIVE #11:**

**IMPLEMENT EEO AND CIVIL RIGHTS RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE DISTRICT**

- Include nondiscrimination statements on information to the public.
- Cooperate with and assist the White Earth Tribal Conservation District as requested.
- Cooperate with and assist the NRCS Tribal liaison as requested.
- Assist in developing conservation plans on tribal lands as requested by the White Earth Indian Reservation.

**Becker SWCD Staffing Needs Workload Analysis**  
**Staff Years**

	<u>Clerical</u>	<u>Administrative</u>	<u>Technical</u>
<b><u>District Staff</u></b>			
Marsha Watland	.35		.40
Ginger Flynn	.65	.35	
Ed Clem		.15	.85
Dean Hendrickson		.10	.90
Brad Grant		.85	.15
<b><u>NRCS Staff</u></b>			
Jeff Norby		.20	.80
Ed Musielewicz		.70	.30
<b>Ducks Unlimited &amp; Minn. Waterfowl Staff</b>			
John Voz – Ducks Unlimited		.50	.50
Phil Doll – Minn. Waterfowl Assn.		.50	.50
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>4.40</b>

**These staff years include four full time SWCD staff, one part time SWCD staff, three full time NRCS employees, one Ducks Unlimited staff position and one Minnesota Waterfowl Association employee.**

## Budget

<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>Proposed 2011 Budget</b>
<b>DISTRICT OPERATIONS</b>	
Personal Services	\$280,264
Other Services and Charges (Including Membership Dues*)	\$41,795
Supplies, Phone, Internet, Postage	<u>\$3,450</u>
Total District Operations	\$325,509
<b>PROJECT EXPENDITURES</b>	
District	\$31,300
State	<u>\$19,700</u>
Total Project Expenditures	\$51,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b><u>\$376,509</u></b>
<b>REVENUE</b>	
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUES</b>	
State Grant	\$43,772
County Allotment	\$183,561
County LWP	\$23,556
County - WCA	<u>\$23,830</u>
Total Intergovernmental Revenue	\$274,719
<b>CHARGES FOR SERVICES</b>	\$78,660
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	
Interest	4,500
Misc.	<u>\$0</u>
Total Misc.	\$4,500
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b><u>\$357,879</u></b>
<b>Deficit - Balance to come from Becker SWCD's Fund Balance</b>	<b><u>\$18,630</u></b>
	<b><u>\$376,509.00</u></b>

\*Dues - NACD - \$775  
- MASWCD - \$2,850  
- Area II MASWCD - \$150  
- MACAI - \$75