



Northland Conservation News



A Publication of the Kittson Soil & Water Conservation District,
410 S. 5th Street, Suite 106, Hallock, MN 56728-4140, Phone 218-853-2619
and the Two Rivers Watershed District,
410 S. 5th Street, Suite 112, Hallock, MN 56728-4140, Phone 218-843-3333

Two Rivers Watershed District

Spring 2023

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Page 2..... TRWD Raises Bounty
- Page 3.....Dostal 2023 Ranching
- Page 4.....Flood Damage Reduction Work Group
- Page 5. Manure Application for Farmers, Manure Testing Kits
- Page 6..... SWCD Provides
- Page 72022 Photo Contest
- Page 10.....Buffer Law Enforcement
- Page 11 Two Rivers Permit Application
- Page 12.. Two Rivers Fact Sheet
- Page 13..... FSA update
- Page 15..... Quick Guide to Cover Crops
- Page 16..... 2022 Rainfall
- Page 17 Understanding Conservation Tillage
- Page 18..... Kittson SWCD Services, WCD Watershed Based Implementation Funding
- Page 19..... Outreach Update

2023 Spring Snowmelt and Runoff Resulted in Moderate Flooding for Most Area Rivers



SWCD Supervisors: *Chairman - CJ Peterson, Vice Chairman - Andrew Muir, Secretary - Carey Mortenson, Treasurer - Joe Wilebski, and Public Relations - Sam Anderson*

SWCD Staff: *District Outreach Specialist - Heather Donoho, District Administrator - Jamie Osowski, and District Technician - Jeremy Benson*

NRCS Staff: *District Conservationist - Bonnie Hasbrouck, Soil Conservationist Technician - Jillian Fejszes*

Two Rivers Watershed District Managers: *President - Rick Sikorski, Vice President - Roger Anderson, Secretary - Daryl Klegstad, Treasurer - Gerald Olsonawski, Manager - Scott Klein, Manager - Bruce Anderson, and Manager - Mark Langehaug*

Two Rivers Watershed District Staff: *Administrator - Dan Money, and District Technician - Tyler Coffield*

As of May 1, spring flooding at all locations on the Two Rivers was winding down, the Red River flood was cresting at Drayton and about a week away from cresting at Pembina. The 2023 spring snowmelt flood numbers are shown in the table below, and where they rank historically.

Location	2023 Crest	Rank	Record / Year
Hallock - Two Rivers	807.18	22nd	810.7 / 1997
Drayton - Red River	40.38	19th	45.55 / 1997
Pembina - Red River	48.0 - predicted	12th	54.94 / 1997

Spring snowmelt was delayed by cool weather and several spring storms that deposited additional snow on the ground well into April.

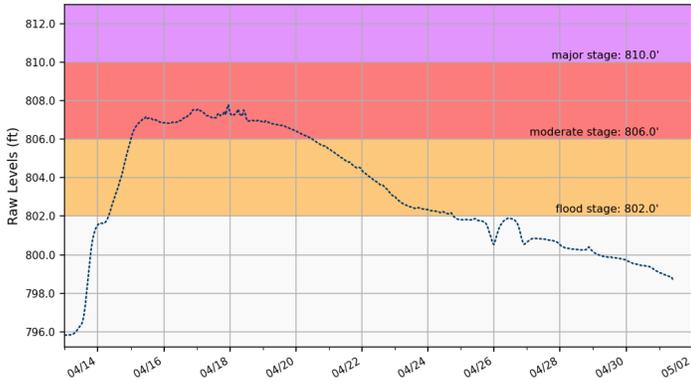
When the temperatures did warm up, the snowpack within the Two Rivers Watershed District and other northern Red River tributaries melted and ran off rather quickly. The hydrograph below depicts the Two Rivers runoff and river levels beginning around April 13th through May 1st. The river reached moderate flood stage for about 1 week. Several roads, ditches and other public infrastructure were affected for a short period of time.

On the Red River, in spite of the fact that there was major snowpack and snow water content in areas south of Grand Forks / East Grand Fork and Fargo / Moorhead, the river did not reach major

See Spring Snowmelt Continued on page 2

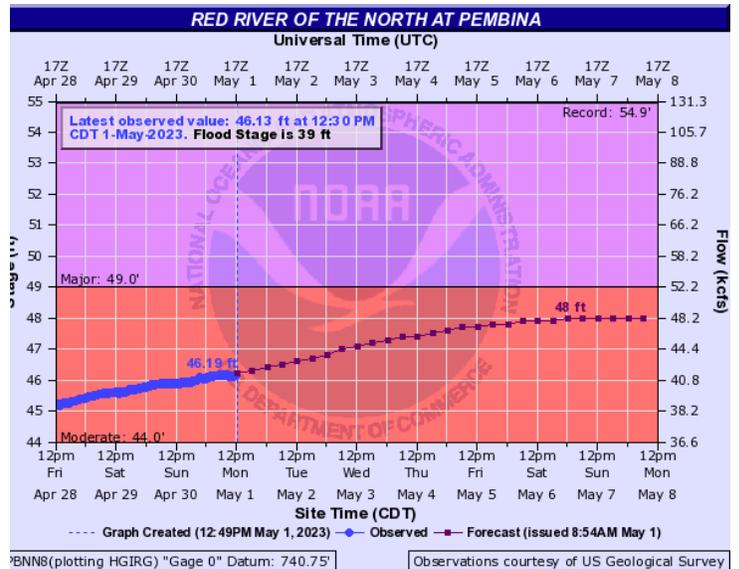
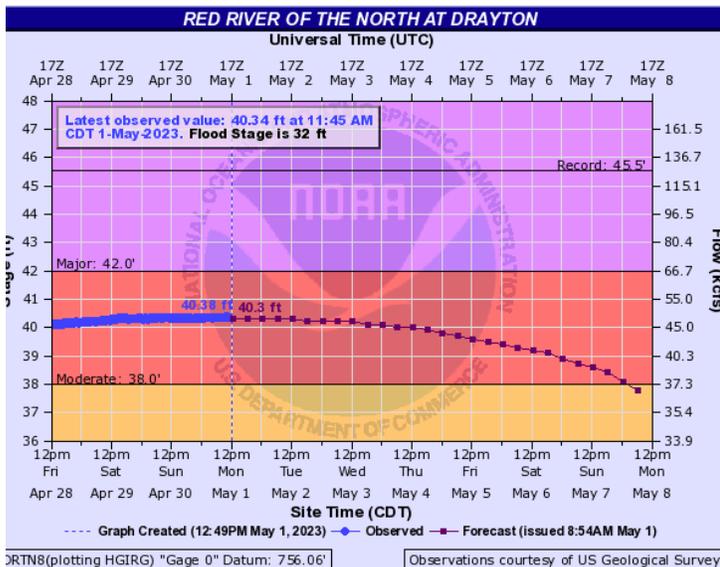
Spring Snowmelt: Continued from page 1

South Branch Two Rivers at Hallock, MN175 (70018001)
2023-4-13 to 2023-5-1



Source: MN DNR Cooperative Stream Gaging Program

flood stage in Kittson County. Rather, it stayed in the moderate flood category. The two hydrographs below are from the National Weather Service as of May 1, showing the trend one week into the future.



So what are the factors that go into a flood prediction outlook? Spring flooding depends on many factors, based upon seasons. In the fall we look at the amount of precipitation that falls, and the stream base flows going into winter. In the winter, we look at frost depth, snow pack / depth, and snow water content. Then, in the spring the factors we look at are precipitation in the form of rain, and the thaw cycle – whether it is a fast melt or if the duration is extended.

During 2022 / 2023 in the Red River Basin, fall moisture was not a factor, but fall base flows were at or above normal. Snow depths in parts of the valley were excessive, and snow water equivalents were between 2” and 6”. The frost depths measured were between 2 and 3 feet. The snow melted rather quickly and some spring rain occurred. An extended melt with thawing during the day and freezing at night tends to lessen the flooding, however constant above freezing temperatures will cause a quicker melt and result in higher flood levels. The graphic below shows the various components of flooding.

The Two Rivers Watershed District monitors local flooding

See Spring Snowmelt
Continued on page 3

TRWD Raises Bounty for Problem Beavers



The Two Rivers Watershed District recently raised its Beaver Bounty from \$75 to \$100 per beaver trapped on ditches under its jurisdiction. These include over 110 miles on 15 different drainage ditches and watershed district projects.

Beaver dams on drainage systems can cause water to back up onto adjacent cropland, and the TRWD periodically inspects its ditches so they can be maintained for proper drainage.

Once a beaver problem has been identified, trappers will be hired to remove the problem beavers. District staff have to be informed of the problem prior to any beaver removal. Bounties will not be paid if staff are not notified prior.

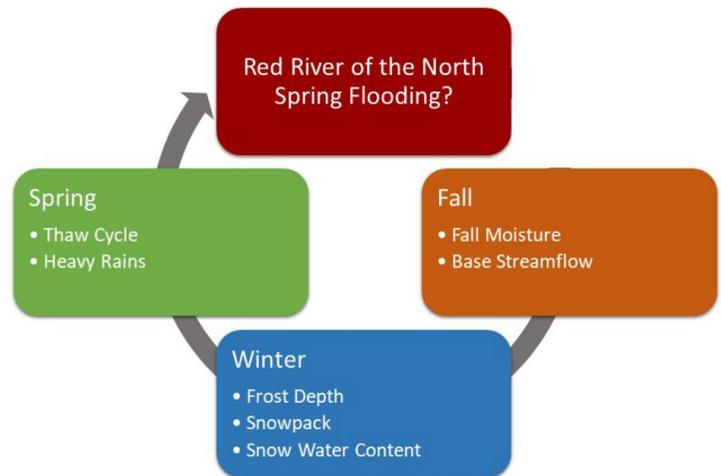
After beavers are removed from a ditch, the District will typically hire a backhoe to remove the dam and any debris that is in the vicinity. Please let us know if you are interested in being placed on our list of beaver trappers!

Spring Snowmelt: Continued from page 2

closely and provides daily updates regarding river levels, flood impacts, and operation of flood control impoundments. Watershed District staff have established 15-20 stream gaging stations throughout the watershed and monitor river levels and measure the amount of water passing through the system. We work closely with DNR and the National Weather Service to monitor and report flooding and flood forecasts to the agencies and to the public.

Here are a few important reminders to landowners to keep in mind during times when either spring or summer flooding is occurring:

- If you have a farmstead ring dike with a culvert / gate through the dike, the time to make sure the gate is working is prior to the flood. It should be operated a couple of times, lubricated if necessary, and placed in the closed position.
- Any landowners who have been issued a tile drainage permit from the Watershed District are reminded that no discharges from the tile are allowed when there is flooding going on. This means anywhere from your outlet / pump all the way to the Red River. Discharging tile water during a flood is generally just adding to the flooding problem.
- Permits for any alteration of a dike, road, or culvert are required from the Two Rivers Watershed District. When



[Bluemle: Factors Affecting Flooding In the Red River Valley, 1997]

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Building a Weather-Ready Nation

there is flooding occurring, it is District policy that none of these be altered. If property is in imminent danger, please call the District office at 218-843-3333.

- Please report flooding over roads to the Sherriff's office, Highway Department, or County Emergency Services. Do not attempt to drive through flooded roadways.

Dostal 2023 Ranching for Profit Scholarship

Danika and Allan Dostal received a scholarship from the Kittson SWCD to attend the Ranching for Profit School hosted in Grand Forks, ND on January 29th- February 4th, 2023. Danika was interested in attending a Ranching for Profit Workshop because she had enjoyed founder David Pratt's "Healthy Land, Happy Families, and Profitable Businesses" book. She said some of the concepts within the book challenged her way of thinking, but piqued her interest to attend the RFP school to learn more. The Dostals knew a few people who had gone previously attended RFP, and as much as they wanted to attend, they say they wouldn't have gone without the scholarship.

"It's hard to allocate the funds, even when you know it's worth it every penny," Danika admits. This scholarship allowed both Allan and Danika to attend, which they say is invaluable as a husband and wife who are also business partners. As they now work to apply the Ranching for Profit concepts to their own operation, they say they couldn't have afforded not to go.

On day one, the RFP class of 26 was split into small groups. Any husband and wife who attended together were split into separate groups, an arrangement that gave them different pools of people



Ranching for Profit School Grand Forks, ND 2023 class. (Photo credit: Ranching for Profit School John Locke.)

to learn from and challenged them to step outside their comfort zones throughout the week. Class lasted from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. each day, during which they were introduced to concepts ranging from economics and finance, to ecology and grazing management, to better understanding our most important resource – our people. During class, they worked on case studies with their small groups, and after class, they worked late

into the night, applying concepts learned that day to their own operations.

"You'd work until your brain gave out," the Dostals say. The first days of the class were uniquely challenging, because it was in this timeframe they were challenged to "stretch their brains" as traditional beliefs were challenged, and alternative ways of thinking were

See Dostal:
Continued on page 6

Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Works to Plan and Design Projects

There are several organizations within the Red River Valley that are working on the huge problem of flooding. Among these are the RRWMB, RRRRA, RRBC NDJWRB, and others.

One little known organization is quietly helping to identify problem areas, formulate a range of solutions, come up with a preferred alternative, navigate the plethora of federal, state, and local permits, and provide start up funding to get projects off the ground.

This organization is known as the Red River **FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION WORK GROUP, OR FDRWG.**

HISTORY: The FDRWG was formed in 1998 when the Red River Watershed Management Board clashed with the MN DNR and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The federal and state agencies were concerned with environmental impacts to the Red River of flood control impoundments that they said were detrimental. A lawsuit ensued and the judge ultimately decided the two sides must enter into mediation. Over the course of several years, the two sides finally came together and signed the historic 1998 Mediation Agreement. The Agreement stated future projects must consider both Flood Damage Reduction and Natural Resources Enhancements. The FDRWG was thus born, and it is comprised of representation from local citizens, watershed districts, soil & water conservation districts, counties, environmental groups, MN Dept. of Natural Resources, MN Pollution Control Agency, MN Board of Water & Soil Resources, MN Dept. of Transportation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Red River Watershed Management Board.

PURPOSE: The FDRWG provides guidance and funding to local Project Work Teams, which are formed to identify and solve

local water resources problems consistent with the Mediation Agreement. It promotes inclusion of natural resources enhancements in combination with flood damage reduction. It reviews and recommends projects to receive construction funding from regional, state, and federal agencies.

W a t e r s h e d Districts in the Red River Basin form collaborative project teams that use early consultation and cooperative approaches to plan projects. By combining the knowledge of district staff, local landowners, and state and federal agencies, projects can produce outcomes that are beyond any one organization's capabilities.

The Mediation Agreement calls out specific flood damage reduction goals. These include providing flood protection for not only urban areas and farmstead residences, but also providing protection to public infrastructure and to reduce flooding on agricultural lands.

Flood Damage Reduction Strategies

Reduce peak flood flows on the Red River by 20%
Construct flood impoundments to store a total of 45,000 acre feet of floodwater within TRWD
Provide protection for agricultural lands for up to a "10 year" flood event
Provide protection for cities for a "100 year" event
Prevent loss of life
Reduce damages to public infrastructure (roads, bridges)

**See Flood Damage:
Continued on page 5**

'RIFFLES & RUNS'

- News Briefs from Around the Watershed District-

- ❖ On the Red River, work has begun to modify the Drayton Dam and replace it with a rock arch rapids to allow fish passage to upstream areas.
- ❖ The MN DNR is progressing with plans and specifications to replace the aging dam at Lake Bronson State Park. Construction could begin as early as 2024.
- ❖ Several bills are being considered at the MN Legislature:
 - Between \$5 million and \$73 million is being considered for several flood control projects that would be constructed in the Red River Valley
 - Up to \$300,000 in funding for the Riverwatch Program for high school students
 - Up to \$300,000 in funding for the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group
 - Up to \$150,000 to fund activities of the Red River Basin Commission
 - Numerous other bills are being considered that would affect Drainage Projects and Water Storage
- ❖ FEMA Funding is still being processed from the 2022 spring/summer flooding. Various projects of the Two Rivers Watershed District include repairs to Kittson County Ditch 21, Judicial Ditch 10 Branch B, and the Horseshoe Lake impoundment.

Manure Application for Farmers Big and Small

Cattle and other feedlot animals produce manure and this animal waste must be properly managed. Some farmers choose the manure on their own fields, while others get paid to spread it on another landowners' field. Where feasible, storing the manure to spread in fields at a later time is another option. However you choose to manage your manure situation, here are some guidelines to help you along the way.

Manure Testing: All storage areas holding manure from more than 100 animal units (Au) must be tested for nitrogen and phosphorus at least once every four years, or more frequently if management changes could lead to varying nutrient content. Individual stockpiles and manure packs generated by fewer than 100 Au are not required to be tested.

Soil Testing: Soil testing is not generally required for feedlots with less than 300 Au. If you have over 300 Au, testing for soil phosphorus levels every four years is required.

Manure Management Plans: Manure management plans are not required for feedlots with less than 300 Au unless you are required to obtain a feedlot operation or construction permit. If you are over 300 Au then you are required to complete a manure management plan. There may be programs available through the NRCS to provide technical assistance and financial assistance during management planning.

Record Keeping: Manure application record keeping is required for all feedlots that have more than 100 Au. More detailed records are required for feedlots with more than 300 Au's or for feedlots with more than 100 Au's when applying manure in drinking-water supply management areas where the aquifer is designated vulnerable. Record keeping is also required for feedlots with more than 300 Au's that transfer their manure for application to fields not owned or leased by the owner of the feedlot where the manure is produced.

Special Protection Areas: Additional protective measures are required for application of manure in special protection areas, including land within 300 feet of lakes, streams, intermittent streams (excluding grassed waterways), public waters wetlands (e.g. over 10 acres) and drainage ditches without protective berms. Winter application is prohibited in these areas. If a vegetated buffer is present in these specialty areas, there are no other land application restrictions. A permanent vegetated buffer is a buffer of vegetation that extends 100 feet from lakes and streams and 50 feet from all other waters. If there is no vegetative buffer, you are required to maintain at least a 25 foot setback and inject or incorporate the manure within 24 hours. It is also a requirement to apply the manure in a way that does not result in the accumulation of phosphorus in areas that already have sufficient crop growth. Manure must also be injected or incorporated within 24 hours if you are within 300 feet of an open tile intake. This also applies if the area is within 300 feet of the upslope side of a sinkhole.

Flood Damage Continued from page 4

Natural Resources Enhancement Strategies

- *When constructing projects, provide natural resources enhancements when practical and feasible*
- *Protect, Improve, & Enhance Water Quality*
- *Protect, Improve & Enhance Habitat*
- *Provide Stream Flow Augmentation*
- *Provide Recreational Opportunities*

The Agreement that guides the work of the FDRWG also recognizes that planning and developing flood projects can provide opportunities to enhance water quality, wetlands, lakes, stream corridors, and upland habitats. The agreement lists 9 distinct goals for natural resources enhancement that can be advanced through creative project planning.

FUNDING: Since 1998, the FDRWG has received annual funding from appropriations from the Minnesota Legislature. This funding has been utilized for research regarding various aspects of flood control. To date, 15 technical and scientific papers have been written to aid project work teams in developing projects. Funding is also available to the local planning teams to do research and engineering that is necessary to plan and develop projects and also to apply for the myriad permits that are necessary for most projects.

Numerous projects have been constructed using this process in the Red River Valley, including in the Roseau River, Two Rivers, Red Lake River, Tamarac-Middle-Snake Rivers, and points south. There are currently 8 projects that are in the process, and 4 new start up projects. One of these projects is the "Juneberry Resiliency" project, which is sponsored by the Two Rivers WD, Roseau River WD, and Roseau and Kittson County's. This project is looking at flooding issues and alternatives regarding overflows that enter the Two Rivers from the Roseau River.

For more information on the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, please visit the following website:

<https://www.rwmb.us/fdrwg>

Manure Testing Kits

The Kittson SWCD is offering Free Manure Testing kits to Kittson County Livestock Producers. The testing kits come from AG Vise Laboratories. The district is paying for the M3 partial analysis package. This tests the dry matter, total nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium in the manure sample. Test kits are available for pick up in the office. Producers are responsible for sampling and submitting the manure themselves. Submit the receipt from AG Vise to the SWCD for Reimbursement. If you choose to select analysis beyond the M3 partial package, the SWCD will reimburse up to \$50 of the cost.

To sample solid manure:

1. Collect multiple samples (15 to 25) from manure pile, combine in clean plastic bucket
 - a. Before hauling: pitchfork or shovel from different depths, avoid top or edges with crust
 - b. During hauling: several samples from each load
2. On clean surface, chop and mix thoroughly
3. Divide and mix until about one (1) pint remains
4. Transfer one (1) pint to plastic sample jar

Kittson SWCD Provides Information, Support and Program Management

Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District provides conservation information, support, and program management for landowners and other local units of government. We are the technical experts and “boots on the ground” who understand our community’s needs and help landowners navigate conservation programs from start to finish.

SWCDs are funded primarily through the state legislature through the Board of Water and Soil Resources. If Minnesota wants to continue to help landowners interested in voluntary conservation projects, it needs to find an adequate and permanent funding solution for SWCDs. Our state legislators will consider a proposed solution – SWCD Aid – which would be a standing, statutory appropriation to SWCDs from the Department of Revenue.

On March 7th and 8th, Kittson SWCD Board Members Joe Wilebski and Andrew Muir along with District Manager Jamie Osowski traveled to the State Capital and were able to visit with Senator Mark Johnson and Representative John Burkel on the importance of SWCD Aid for the Kittson SWCD. This funding would be beneficial to the Kittson SWCD in hiring and retaining qualified and credentialed staff to help us increase our pace of progress toward clean water and healthy soil goals.



Top Picture: Kittson SWCD Board Member Joe Wilebski, District Manager Jamie Osowski and Board Member Andrew Muir visit the Minnesota State Capital.



Picture at Left: Kittson SWCD Board Member Joe Wilebski, Peggy Wilebski, Minnesota Representative John Burkel, District Manager Jamie Osowski and Board Member Andrew Muir visit about the importance of stable funding for SWCD's.

Dostal: Continued from page 3

presented. The course pushed the boundaries of what they believed possible, opening the door to breakthroughs that could change their lives.

Before the training, Danika says they were hopeful for solutions that could work for their operation in their climate, but admits she had some doubts.

“Everyone feels their problems are unique or that certain concepts don’t apply to them. By the end of the workshop, you’re looking at things through a new lens. We’re all working to do our best, but sometimes you don’t have all the right tools. Sometimes, we’re aiming for the wrong target,” she says. “It’s all about your own paradigms, and being open and willing to change them,” Allan adds.

The work doesn’t end when the class ends. The training teaches you to re-evaluate and fix ineffective systems, and the real work begins when you go home. They say it’s been hard to maintain the momentum of the class with all the work waiting at home, but the abundant resources RFP provides to continue “working on the business,” as well as the continued connections with the classmates in their small groups, makes it possible, albeit at a slower pace. Their respective small groups have become a network of support, encouragement and accountability.

“It feels overwhelming and really challenging, because it’s so different from what you’re used to. It can feel impossible and people can be afraid to do things differently, but there seem to be endless examples of where it’s worked for other people, so why can’t we find a way to make it work for us, too?” says Allan. “We need to identify what’s holding us back and trim the deadwood from our own operation.”

The Dostals are excited about what they’ve learned and the changes they plan to make on their farm, all with the goal of creating a sustainable and resilient family business that the next generation could continue to love and transform.

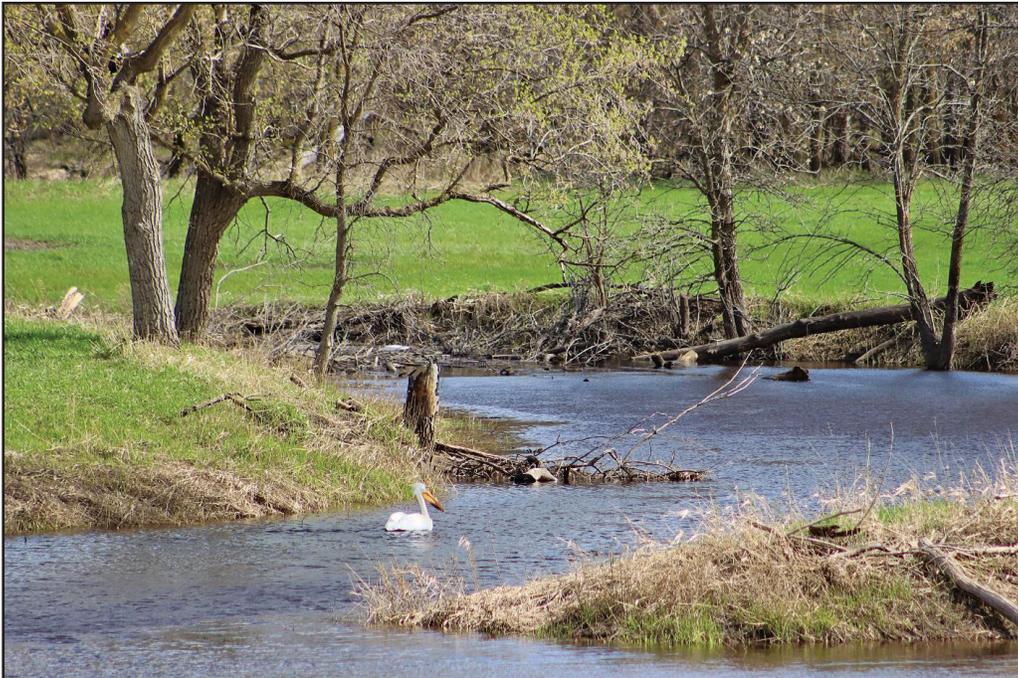
To encourage continuing education on soil health, like the Ranching for Profit School, The Kittson SWCD Board has allocated funds to provide scholarships to soil health related trainings. Interested individuals will be asked to fill out an application and provide a short explanation of how this training will benefit conservation on their land. Upon approval from the board, the recipient will receive reimbursement with proof of registration. Contact the Kittson SWCD at 218-853-2619, if you are interested in applying for a scholarship.

2022 Photo Contest

The Kittson SWCD hosted the photo contest on Facebook for 2 years and received a lot of wonderful pictures of the Kittson County landscape. Unfortunately, due to a shortage of staff at the Kittson SWCD, the photo contest will not be held in 2023. We hope to be able to offer this contest again when staffing is available.

2022 Winners:

May – Nicole Ryden



June – Kaia Johnston

2022 Photo Contest

2022 Winners:

July – Mallori Davis



August – Noah Maier-Weleski

2022 Photo Contest

2022 Winners:

September – Leanna Lindegard



October – Nicole Ryden



2022 Photo Contest

2022 Winners:



November – Hayley Coffield

Buffer Law Enforcement

The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District would like to remind everyone as they are beginning to get into 2023 spring field work, to make sure they are compliant with the Minnesota Buffer Law (Minn. Stat. 103F.48). The Buffer Law requires a 16.5-foot buffer on all Public Drainage Systems and a 50-foot buffer around all Public Waters. The Kittson SWCD encourages landowners to talk with us and/or their renters to discuss what options are available to become compliant with this law.

The Kittson SWCD oversees reviewing and tracking compliance with the buffer law. The SWCD is required through the Minnesota Buffer Law to monitor compliance by reviewing all parcels on a 3-year basis. We will be reviewing and monitoring 1/3 of all buffer parcels each year as well as

doing random spot checks. You can find more information about our tracking and monitoring program on the Kittson SWCD website.

The Kittson SWCD also offers a Buffer Financial Assistance Program that is designed to help landowners achieve compliance without burdening them with the financial struggles that may come with becoming compliant with the Minnesota Buffer Law

If you have any questions on the Buffer Law, Monitoring Program, Compliance Status or how-to sign-up for the Kittson SWCD Buffer Financial Assistance Program, please stop by our office or contact us at (218)-853-2619. We appreciate you working with us on becoming compliant with the buffer law. Thank you!

Two Rivers Watershed District Permit Application

Office Use Only Application Number _____	Recommended Action: Approval _____ Denial _____
Date Received _____	Table _____ Date _____
Reviewed by: _____	

Name _____ **Phone Number** _____

Email _____

Address _____
Box Street City State Zip code

Location of Project:

<small>¼ Section</small>	<small>¼ Section</small>	<small>Section</small>	<small>Township</small>	<small>Range</small>	<small>Township Name</small>	<small>County</small>
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Body of Water (river, ditch, coulee, etc.) _____

Are You: _____ **Landowner** _____ **Renter** _____ **Other (describe)** _____

Description of Work & Objectives: Fill in all applicable blanks below.

What's the upstream drainage area of the project? _____ Acres

Are there any upstream structures (culverts, bridges, etc.)? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Size _____

What kind of structure is upstream (box culvert, round pipe, bridge, etc.)? _____

Are there any downstream structures? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Size _____ type _____

For Culvert Projects: Size to be Installed _____ Type of Culvert _____
 Purpose: Center line culvert thru road _____ New crossing _____ Other _____

For Ditch Projects: Length _____ Bottom Width _____ Depth _____ Side Slopes _____
 Percent Slope (Grade) _____ *Attach Profile and Cross Section Information*

For Diking Projects: Length _____ Top Width _____ Height _____

For Road Building: Length: _____ Width _____ Height _____
Submit grading plans, survey data, cross sections, culvert plans, ditch plans, etc.

Are Wetlands Affected? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Size (acres) _____

Approximate Project Start Date _____ End Date _____

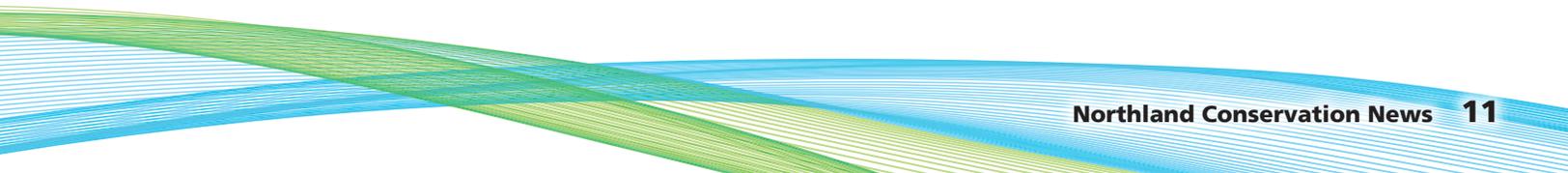
Describe below the purpose of the project and how it will be completed (attach sheet if necessary).

Signed: _____
 Project Proposer

Date: _____

 Landowner – If Other Than Above

Tear Here



Two Rivers Watershed District

In Roseau, Kittson, & Marshall Counties



410 5th Street S., Suite 112, Hallock, MN 56728 - Phone (218) 843-3333 - Fax (218) 843-2020 - email: dan.money@tworiverswd.com
Website: www.TwoRiversWD.com

FACT SHEET - Projects Requiring a TRWD Permit

The Two Rivers Watershed District adopted *Rules* in 1980 & amended them in 1997, 2015, & 2017. These *Rules* govern projects which have a potential effect on the water resources of the District and specifically relate to drainage, flood control, water use, and water quality. Projects of this type require a permit from the Two Rivers Watershed District before any work is done. There is no charge for the permit, however projects which are commenced or completed without a permit will require a \$500 fee, plus field inspection fees and potential mitigation measures. Some specific works that require permits are listed below. A complete set of *Rules* and a permit application form can be obtained at the District office in the Kittson County Courthouse in Hallock, MN – contact information is listed above.

- (a) Any sanitary sewer system which discharges to surface water, storm sewer, or other major utility project which affects surface water within the district.
- (b) Any street, road, or highway construction project which by means of its construction has any effect on the quality or quantity of water runoff.
- (c) Any construction or alteration of any drain tile or drainage ditch that drains an area in excess of 20 acres.
- (d) Any works which include draining, filling, excavating, or dredging of any type 3, 4, 5, or 8 wetlands as defined by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Circular 39.
- (e) Any construction or alteration of any bridge, dike, culvert, or drain across any drainageway, lake, wetland, or other water body.
- (f) Any artificial or mechanical transfer of water from a water source including but not limited to gravel pits, ponds, rivers, wetlands, and other reservoirs consistent with the general purposes of the District.
- (g) Any artificial drainageway cut across a subwatershed to thereby deliver water into another subwatershed.
- (h) Any drainage of water by any artificial means into any legal drainage system from any land not assessed to that drainage system.
- (i) Construction, alteration, or removal of any dike or reservoir.
- (j) Any other acts that, in the opinion of the Watershed District, may tend to alter the quantity of runoff, affect the public health, or have any impact, whether adverse or not, upon the surface water or ground water resources of the district.

Tear Here

FSA update

Spring SWCD Newsletter
April 3, 2023

Karissa Kraulik Appointed to Service on FSA Committee

Karissa Kraulik has been appointed to the Kittson County FSA Committee as the female minority representative. She farms in the Donaldson, MN area growing wheat, soybeans, and canola. Other FSA Committee members include David Hemmes, Mark Langehaug, and Terry Osowski. FSA Committee members serve as the local voice in farm program delivery, over the years Kittson County has been very fortunate to have individuals willing to serve in the Committee role providing excellent guidance if farm program implementation.

Sign-up Underway for ERP Phase 2 and PARP

FSA is now accepting applications for the Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase Two and the Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP) through June 2, 2023. Both emergency assistance programs are revenue based. Producers should start gathering Schedule F (From 1040), Profit or Loss from Farming or similar tax documents for tax years 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021 for ERP and for calendar years 2018, 2019 and 2020 for PARP. The county office has a sign-up tool available to aid producers in reporting allowable gross revenues for the application process, contact the office for further information and to schedule your application appointment.

Transitioning Expiring CRP Land to Beginning, Veteran or Underserved Farmers/Ranchers

CRP contract holders are encouraged to transition their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to beginning, veteran or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers through the Transition Incentives Program (TIP). TIP provides annual rental payments to the landowner or operator for up to two additional years after the CRP contract expires.

CRP contract holders no longer need to be a retired or retiring owner or operator to transition their land. TIP participants must agree to sell, have a contract to sell, or agree to lease long term (at least five years) land enrolled in an expiring CRP contract to a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher who is not a family member.

Beginning, veteran or social disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and CRP participants may enroll in TIP beginning two years before the expiration date of the CRP contract. The TIP application must be submitted prior to completing the lease or sale of the affected lands. New landowners or renters that return the land to production must use sustainable grazing or farming methods.

For more information, contact your Kittson County USDA Service Center by telephone or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Assists Applying for Beginning Farmer Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- o Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- o Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- o Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- o Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

For more information contact, contact your Kittson County USDA Service Center at 218-843-2692 ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Non-Emergency Grazing of CRP During Primary Nesting Season

Landowners with acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and livestock producers be reminded of the expanded opportunities for grazing program acreage. The changes provide landowners a maintenance tool for enrolled acreages while still ensuring appropriate protections to maintain the desired soil, water, and wildlife benefits. Grazing of CRP conservation cover, if done responsibly, have been shown to diversify covers, improve existing stands, and provide benefits to wildlife habitat. All practices are now eligible for non-emergency grazing except for CP-12 wildlife food plots and the following tree practices (CP3, CP3A, CP5A, CP16A, CP17A, CP31, CP36, CP38, (unless authorized by the SAFE agreement), and CP-38). The new provisions allow the CP-23, CP-23A, CP-21, and CP-25 acreages to be grazed.

CRP grazing may occur every other year. If conducted during the Primary Nesting Season (PNS) a 50% reduction of the stocking rate is required. If grazing is conducted outside the PNS the stocking rate is allowed at 100% as determined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). A Conservation Plan of Operations will be developed to ensure grazing will not adversely affect the purpose and performance of the conservation practice. The CRP payment reduction for grazing remains at 25% of the annual payment rate on the acreage grazed. Beginning farmers may graze outside the nesting season with no payment reduction if the beginning farmer is on the CRP-1 contract with a share greater than zero. A beginning farmer must certify on form CCC-860 to not operating a farm or ranch for more than 10 years.

NRCS will work with CRP participants in development of a Conservation Plan that will provide the guidelines that must be followed when grazing CRP. If grazing is to begin before the PNS and was discontinued prior to June 1 a 50% reduction in

See FSA Update
Continued on page 14

the stocking rate would not apply. If grazing is to occur for 1 or more days during the PNS, a 50% reduction in the stocking rate is required during the nesting season. Non-emergency grazing must not exceed 120 days and may begin based upon the established date in the Conservation Plan. Grazing must end the earlier of the minimum grazing heights required entering the dormancy growing season or the date specified in the Conservation Plan.

All are reminded that CRP participants are required to file a request for grazing and receive written approval from FSA prior to beginning. Anyone with questions on non-emergency grazing is encouraged to contact the FSA office.

FSA 2023 Acreage Reporting Maps Available

Producer 2023 FSA farm aerial maps are available for distribution via email or by stopping by the office. If there have been changes in your farming operation (addition or loss of land), please report those changes so farm records are updated prior to map distribution. To request maps electronically email, mnhallock-fsa@one.usda.gov. Producers who wish to pick-up maps in office, please call ahead at (218) 843-2692 extn. 2 and we will have them available when you stop by.

USDA Designed Tool To Access Resource Concerns

USDA has designed a tool for landowners to assess their resource concerns and send them to their local USDA service center through Farmer.gov. The Conservation Concerns tool is found at: <https://www.farmers.gov/conservation#concerns-tool>. The process includes choosing your resource concern, adding it to your concern list and download or print your list to bring in or email to your local USDA service center.

Conservation Concerns Tool

Learn about different types of conservation issues that might impact the productivity or natural resources on your farm, ranch, or forest by exploring the topics below.

You can also build a list of concerns to discuss with a local USDA conservation specialist.



Soil

Soil erosion, soil quality degradation, or soil health



Water

Excess water, insufficient water, or water quality issues



Plants

Reduced health or quality of plants



Animals

Inability to meet livestock or wildlife habitat needs



Energy

Reduced energy efficiency for equipment of field operations



Air

Air quality issues such as greenhouse gases or odors



<https://www.farmers.gov/conservation#concerns-tool>

Quick Guide to Cover Crops

Purpose of this guide is to lay out the basics when making cover crop decisions within your operation. Diversity is key for achieving maximum soil health benefits. Starting off with more than you can handle with cover crops can get overwhelming and frustrating quickly. This quick guide is aimed to ease those frustrations that may come with making decisions on where to start when implementing cover crops.

Step 1: Plan a long-term rotation

Improving soil health and soil function isn't a quick process. Be ready to plan for 5 or more years out but at minimum try to have a 3-year plan. These processes take time and diligent management but when executed effectively can show great improvement in moisture retention during dry periods and improved water infiltration during heavy rain events. Having a long-term rotation can also help you in deciphering which cover crops will work best with herbicide use and possible residuals.

Step 2: Choose your goals

Having a long-term rotation plan makes choosing your goals easier. There is a long list of goals, and everyone's operation and goals are different. Choose a few that you would like to address first then build from there. Some of these goals take time to address over a few years of implementing. Again, this isn't a quick process this may take some time. These are steppingstones into increasing diversity so start small and grow. Examples of goals are:

- Erosion fighter
- Soil Builder
- Weed Suppression
- Lasting Residue
- Nitrogen Scavenging
- Nitrogen Source
- Quick Growth
- Haying/Grazing
- Interseed cover crop with cash crop
- Increase Infiltration

Step 3: Choosing your cover crop

Once you have your plan and goals set, now the fun starts to happen in choosing the types of cover crops that fit your goals and your rotation. There are 4 main groups of cover crops: Grasses, Legumes, Brassicas, and Broadleaves. Each group addresses the goals you picked in Step 2 differently and fits differently into the long-term plan you set in Step 1. Pairing these groups together to achieve multiple goals is the best way to take full advantage of the effects cover crops have to offer. If you have a late season harvest crop such as corn, one of the goals you may want to consider is to interseed a cover crop with the cash crop during the growing season. This is because when harvesting corn during the cooling month of October and sometimes much later, there isn't time for a cover

crop to germinate and have an effect. This is just one of many different scenarios to consider when choosing your cover crop and why this is the last step when starting to implement cover crops.

Protection from erosion isn't the only benefit cover crops and reduced till practices have to offer. They can help with weed suppression, improve soil health, and extend grazing time in the spring and fall. Some cover crops like rye contain allelopathic chemicals that are toxic to weeds. A healthy cover crop can smother smaller weeds and prevent them from germinating. Cover crops add organic matter which helps to improve soil health and function. Many soils will have increased infiltration, reduced compaction, and increased nutrient storage capacity after a few years of cover crops. Grazing cover crops has both economic and soil health benefits. They can extend the length of the grazing season by weeks or even months. This reduces the amount of hay that needs to be put up for the winter. As the animal's graze, they improve soil health by adding manure and saliva to the soil.

Step 4: Evaluate, Educate, and learn from your experience

I know Step 3 was stated as the last step in the process, but this step might be the most important out of all of them. Evaluate, educate, and learn from your experiences. Just like trying out new genetic varieties of wheat and soybeans, you learn what worked and didn't work for you that season. Same principles and questions need to be asked for implementing cover crops. Did it grow? Did I achieve the goals I wanted? Have I given my goals time to develop? Did I have a timing issue? These are just a few questions to ask yourself when evaluating and learning from your experience. Educate yourself from others that have tried cover crops or any sort of practice outside the "norm". Ask the same questions when having discussions. What worked or didn't work? Why did you choose that cover crop over this one? What issues did you have and how did you overcome them? Our best knowledge comes from our peers trying new ideas to address issues. Thinking outside the box, sharing, and learning will go a long way in starting to implement cover crops. "We can not solve our problems with the same thinking we had when we created them" - Albert Einstein.

Utilize this guide along with many others out there as another tool in your toolbox to start your journey towards increasing soil health and soil function. The Cover Crop Decision Tool by Midwest Cover Crops Council and Smartmix by Green Cover Seed are great cover crop tools for walking through these same steps online and can compare side by side what cover crops may work best for you.

Cover Crop Decision Tool: <https://mccc.msu.edu/covercroptool/>

SmartMix (login required): <https://smartmix.greencoverseed.com/>

Kittson County 2022 Rainfall

The Kittson SWCD has been assisting the Minnesota Climatology Network for the last 22 years by working with local volunteers to gather rainfall data around Kittson County. We started this program with 7 rainfall monitors and have increased our program up to 26 monitors. We would like to thank all our volunteers for their collection efforts, without their help we would not be able to provide this important information to local and state levels. We

would like to get at least one monitor from all 30 townships to get a more even distribution across the county. We are currently seeking volunteer monitors from Cannon, Peatland, Klondike, Pelan, McKinley, Norway, and Clow townships. If you are interested in becoming a monitor or would like more information about this program feel free to stop on by our office and learn more about it.

2022 Kittson County Totals

Township & Section	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Arveson 26 - L. Andersen	NR	NR	NR	4.5	5.14	3.57	3.46	3.42	1.36	NR	NR	NR	21.45
Caribou 30- B. Weleski	0.28	0.41	NR	3.78	3.15	2.45	4.44	1.25	2.92	NR	NR	NR	18.68
Davis 3- J. Dz.	0.17	0.28	0.11	3.19	3.63	2.17	3.58	3.18	2.92	0.51	0.11	0.43	20.28
Deerwood 4- S.B.	NR	NR	NR	3.30	4.04	2.28	3.40	5.08	2.17	NR	NR	NR	20.27
Granville 13 - B. L.	0.46	0.84	0.56	4.54	2.98	1.96	6.44	2.42	3.04	0.84	0.69	0.99	25.76
Hallock 12- KCC Science Class	NR	NR	NR	2.45	4.69	1.92	4.23	1.76	3.43	0.53	NR	NR	19.01
Hampden 14- J. M.	NR	0.00											
Hampden 24 - CW. N.	NR	NR	NR	3.50	2.74	1.97	0.92	1.66	2.27	0.58	NR	NR	13.84
Hazelton 22- T.A.	NR	NR	NR	4.12	3.53	2.10	5.58	2.18	3.52	0.38	NR	NR	21.41
Hill 5 - B. D.	0.94	1.22	NR	4.02	4.34	NR	4.80	2.77	2.67	0.75	0.34	1.33	23.18
North Red River 9 - B. Li.	0.28	0.61	0.22	4.17	2.64	2.79	6.41	3.59	3.47	0.72	0.39	NR	25.29
Percy 14 - A. J.	NR	NR	NR	NR	3.58	1.92	4.61	3.15	1.88	NR	NR	NR	15.14
Poppleton 02 - C.P.	NR	0.00											
Poppleton 11- D.A.	NR	NR	NR	3.02	3.83	2.34	4.47	2.26	2.90	0.88	NR	NR	19.70
Richardville 10 - J.P.	0.73	1.13	0.62	4.29	3.17	2.23	4.81	1.61	3.11	1.18	0.70	1.08	24.66
St. Joseph 4 - J. W.	NR	NR	NR	4.62	4.43	2.53	5.75	1.03	3.31	0.98	NR	NR	22.85
St. Vincent 2 - A.H.	NR	NR	NR	5.40	4.98	2.17	4.16	3.03	2.13	0.85	NR	NR	22.72
St. Vincent 24 - N.W.	NR	NR	NR	5.30	4.97	1.85	6.11	3.22	NR	NR	NR	NR	21.45
Skane 5 - M. S.	0.68	0.9	NR	3.54	3.71	2.56	4.31	3.17	2.67	0.72	0.63	1.02	23.91
South Red River 1 - N. P.	NR	NR	NR	3.76	3.70	3.92	4.22	3.01	3.41	0.49	NR	NR	22.51
Spring Brook 25 - J.D.	NR	NR	NR	4.70	3.97	2.95	5.24	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	16.86
Svea 23- K.K	0.26	NR	0.12	3.74	3.51	1.42	2.79	2.34	NR	NR	0.39	0.76	15.33
Teien 12 - C. M.	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	2.12	3.34	2.15	NR	NR	NR	NR	7.61
Tegner 20- R.G.	NR	NR	NR	3.54	3.75	2.26	3.57	2.34	2.86	NR	NR	NR	NR
Tegner 31- Kennedy	NR	2.38	2.83	0.32	0.1	0	19.96						
Thompson 12 - Markit	NR	NR	NR	4.19	2.80	2.18	6.23	1.97	2.59	NR	NR	NR	20.28
McKinley 30- S.A.	NR	NR	NR	3.97	2.64	2.28	5.25	2.12	3.17	0.85	NR	NR	20.28
Avg Rainfall Monitors	0.48	0.77	0.33	3.98	3.74	2.35	4.51	2.46	2.64	0.65	0.42	0.80	23.11
NR = No Report Submitted													

18.47

2011-2021 Total Average Rainfall

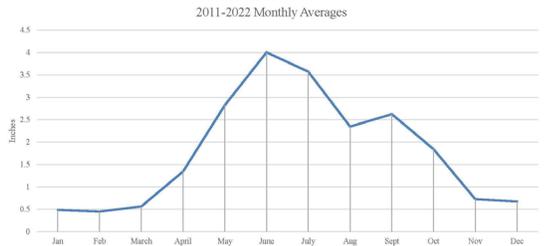
Township & Section	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Arveson 26- L.A.	NR	15.90	28.90	21.80	14.01	21.45	102.06						
Caribou 30- B. Weleski	NR	NR	NR	0.84	27.25	30.99	14.86	16.30	28.69	22.83	13.45	18.68	173.89
Davis 3- J. Dz.	NR	NR	13.06	23.63	26.04	26.56	14.51	14.89	22.50	23.67	15.06	20.28	200.20
Deerwood 4- S.B.	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	13.38	14.15	22.36	21.25	13.18	20.27	104.59
Granville 13 - B. L.	22.06	20.24	24.35	25.89	27.94	34.42	13.95	18.39	27.58	23.86	15.19	25.76	279.63
Hallock 12- KCC	NR	11.17	19.01	50.11									
Hallock 13 - TRW	17.02	14.28	18.2	19.34	22.98	23.61	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	115.43
Hampden 14- J.M.	NR	2.19	NR	7.51	NR	9.70							
Hampden 24 - CW. N.	18.24	18.38	18.33	23.25	22.40	20.74	8.51	10.20	18.87	17.11	11.09	13.64	200.76
Hazelton 22- T.A.	NR	22.48	30.59	11.68	21.41	86.16							
Hill 5 - B. D.	15.71	18.91	19.75	22.46	27.93	28.36	13.69	14.64	25.02	19.52	14.81	23.18	243.98
Jupiter 18 - R. P.	20.53	18.19	11.2	21.73	23.14	26.45	12.36	13.27	20.85	25.29	13.62	NR	206.63
North Red River 9 - B. Li.	17.91	18.03	19.04	22.37	25.13	28.32	12.64	13.17	21.52	18.78	15.56	25.29	237.76
Norway 21- D. Olson	21.69	NR	NR	20.16	23.62	24.20	13.00	9.45	16.11	20.93	NR	NR	149.16
Percy 14 - A. J.	17.91	9.98	16.9	19.87	22.13	25.32	13.05	10.11	17.22	23.20	11.09	15.14	201.92
Poppleton 02 - C.P.	NR	15.52	18.41	5.21	0.00	39.14							
Poppleton 11- D.A.	NR	24.80	16.93	11.70	19.70	73.13							
Richardville 10 - J.P.	20.16	19.2	22.78	25.09	27.30	30.20	15.17	19.25	24.54	21.30	16.40	24.66	266.05
St. Joseph 4 - J. W.	18.84	16.68	19.23	23.48	23.53	30.06	14.26	17.38	23.83	16.40	14.24	22.65	240.58
St. Vincent 2 - A. H.	17.27	16.16	18.46	18.42	22.85	24.75	10.76	13.27	19.06	12.65	13.80	22.72	210.17
St. Vincent 24 - N.W.	15.34	7.83	9.77	18.08	21.55	22.88	11.51	13.37	15.66	16.80	12.42	21.45	186.66
Skane 5 - M. S.	19.86	16.35	16	19.83	23.51	24.23	7.61	15.52	21.41	24.79	11.48	23.91	224.50
South Red River - N. P.	NR	9.03	15.86	10.11	11.25	22.51	68.76						
Spring Brook 25 - J.D.	22.78	13.19	13.25	21.30	19.84	26.44	14.66	11.66	23.05	22.44	3.73	16.86	209.20
Svea 23- K.K	NR	NR	14.17	21.86	27.80	30.06	15.04	20.19	23.37	26.71	14.04	15.33	208.57
Tegner 31- M.C.	19.92	15.18	19.96	20.94	NR	23.20	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	99.20
Teien 12 - C. M.	14.03	13.45	11.22	13.39	18.22	23.07	9.95	8.31	8.35	23.16	5.38	7.61	156.14
Teien 28 - T. D.	18.79	13.98	18.87	19.16	22.08	27.06	11.59	14.29	14.74	9.95	7.19	NR	177.70
Thompson 12 - Markit	19.65	12.84	18.3	21.21	22.16	24.92	10.52	13.99	20.53	22.93	11.25	20.28	218.58
Mickinley 30- S.A.	NR	3.41	14.77	20.28	38.46								
Avg Rainfall Monitors	18.76	15.46	16.99	20.11	23.87	26.47	12.55	13.94	20.19	19.81	11.59	19.13	188.16
NR = No Report Submitted for													

Rain/Snow records

Kittson County 2022 Rainfall

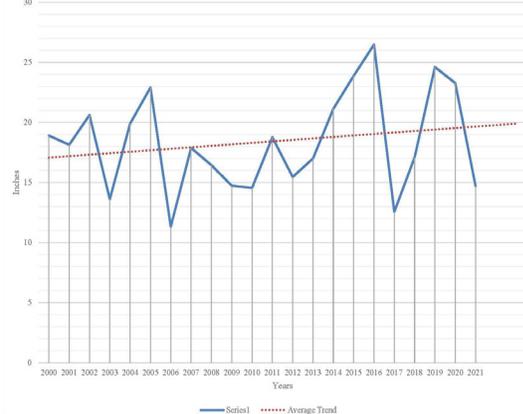
2011-2021 Total Average Rainfall

Year	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2011	0.95	0.1822	0.19444	2.1826	3.504	4.599	4.8167	1.895	2.5568	0.68	0.219	0.1738
2012	0.28444444	0.74	1.05333	1.1038	1.9926	1.9185	2.7681	1.8926	0.115	4.0929	0.9827	0.5044
2013	0.682	0.737	0.615	1.2481	4.14	2.9079	3.0195	2.9067	1.382	1.1395	0.6333	0.82
2014	0.995	0.4	0.806	1.7167	3.7568	6.1893	3.441	2.5779	1.8867	0.8707	0.23	0.7
2015	0.53857143	0.255	0.66583	0.8412	4.636	3.2743	4.8525	3.8405	3.3368	1.4376	1.5385	1.055
2016	0.22777778	0.2444	1.05	1.9283	3.0881	5.781	5.65	2.729	4.4465	1.4816	0.8925	1.5867
2017	0.67571429	0.4075	0.33111	0.7211	1.1515	3.1132	1.5005	1.004	4.0225	0.4044	0.6133	0.73
2018	0.2075	0.3786	0.71714	0.1315	2.3671	3.7467	1.8091	1.2918	2.3438	2.4991	0.7075	0.54
2019	0.24714286	1.0757	0.64	0.5235	1.6425	2.8521	3.85	1.9546	7.0683	3.61	0.7657	0.3786
2020	0.32428571	0.0867	0.19857	0.8167	1.402	8.2664	6.7746	3.09	0.8014	0.8347	0.1713	0.575
2021	0.13375	0.1063	0.16273	0.9461	2.4911	1.3983	0.8181	2.6322	0.9222	3.2067	1.235	0.6614
2022	0.475	0.77	0.33	3.9836	3.7357	2.3452	4.505	2.4571	2.641	0.6487	0.4188	0.8014
Average	0.48676554	0.4486	0.56318	1.3453	2.8256	4.0043	3.5727	2.3471	2.6258	1.8412	0.7263	0.6723



2011-2021 Total Average Rainfall

Yearly Average Rain/Snowfall 2000-Present Kittson County



Year	Inches
2000	18.9
2001	18.13
2002	20.61
2003	13.61
2004	19.9
2005	22.9
2006	11.32
2007	17.87
2008	16.44
2009	14.73
2010	14.54
2011	18.76
2012	15.46
2013	16.99
2014	21.12
2015	23.87
2016	26.47
2017	12.595
2018	17.089
2019	24.602
2020	23.34485
2021	14.705
2022	23.107
Total	18,56799

Understanding Conservation Tillage

So, you are interested in conservation tillage but don't know where to start or what to consider or what conservation tillage really means. This guide is a spin off from the "Quick Guide to Cover Crops" and aims to help you understand things to consider when planning to implement conservation tillage or any new practice. What is conservation tillage? You may have heard this term tossed around a few conferences, meetings, or events but what does it really mean. Conservation tillage is just conservative tillage or reduced tillage. Some call it No-Till/Zero Tillage but it could be as simple as taking 1 or 2 less tillage passes or trying a different piece of machinery that isn't quite as aggressive. Like trying anything new there are baby steps involved. Don't feel like you have to do No-Till/Zero Till on every acre of your farm next year. Here are a few steps that you can follow and adjust to your liking when considering implementing conservation tillage.

Step 1: Long Term Planning

There is no quick way to promote soil health and improving soil function. Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither is your soil. Try to lay out a 5-year plan or more on where, when, and how you plan to try implementing conservation tillage. At minimum make it a plan for 3 years. Start your planning small with what do I want to try this first year. How many acres do I want to try this on? What crop am I planning to do next year? There are more planning questions, but these are just to get your mind going. Once you have your first year planned look to year 2 and ask the same questions. This planning process can take time but when executed effectively can show great improvements in soil functions. With any plan things don't always go accordingly. We are at the mercy of Mother Nature when it comes to farming so be flexible.

Step 2: Setting Goals

Once you have a plan in place think of some goals that you want to achieve from implementing conservation tillage. There are many reasons and goals to consider when trying conservation tillage, so pick a few that fit your needs and operation then focus on honing in the skills to achieve them before taking on to many at one time. No need to have a million goals or reasons as to why you started and then be frustrated if things don't pan out. Improving soil health and function isn't a quick process this may take some time. Examples of goals or reasons:

- Erosion Control
- Weed Suppression

- Soil Building
- Reduce Compaction
- Reduce diesel
- Haying/Grazing Stubble
- Lasting Residue
- Increase Infiltration
- Plant Protection

Step 3: Choosing a Practice

Once you have a plan and some goals you want to achieve now is when you get to choose which ideas you are going to try. There are many different types of tillage equipment, and everyone runs their equipment differently. This can make it difficult to decide on how you want to adjust. You could decide to just dive in and go straight No-Till/ Zero Till on a few acres or you can put your toes in the water can try just 1 pass in the fall and 1 in the spring before planting. Whatever you decide to do make sure that you are comfortable with it. Just cause John Doe did it one way doesn't always mean it will work for you. You might not have the same equipment as Mr. Doe.

Step 4: Evaluate, Educate and Learn

This is probably the most important step. Evaluate, Educate and Learn from your experiences. Similar to trying a new genetic variety of your crop, you learn what worked and what didn't work for you that year. The same questions can be asked when doing conservation tillage. Did crop grow like the other acres? Did I achieve my goals or reasons why I tried Conservation tillage? Have I given my goals enough time to take effect? Was it too wet or dry? Did I have a timing issue? These are just a few questions to consider asking yourself when evaluating and learning from your experience. Once you've learned from it how can you adjust to make it fit better. Educate yourself from others that have tried it or some other practice outside the "norm". See what has worked or didn't work for them. What equipment did they use? How is it similar or different from yours? What issues did you have and how did you overcome them? Our best knowledge comes from our peers trying new ideas to address issues. Thinking outside the box, sharing, and learning will go a long way in trying conservation tillage. "We can not solve our problems with the same thinking we had when we created them."-Albert Einstein.

Utilize this guide along with many others out there as another tool in your toolbox to start your journey towards increasing soil health and soil function. NRCS has some great materials to learn more about Conservation Tillage (Reduced Till). The Kittson SWCD also has other tools and ways to assist in planning when considering implementing Conservation Tillage.

Kittson SWCD Custom Services



The Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), has a variety of services they have to offer this year, from custom seeding service, tree planting, drill rental and more. Drill rental includes a 10-foot Truax Flex 2 Drill available for rent during the 2023 crop year. This drill allows planting into clean tilled seed beds and plots. The tractor requirements for the Truax are at least a 60-horsepower tractor with 2 sets of hydraulic ports (remotes). This drill has three separate seed boxes that allows you to use multiple different seed types as well as planting at varying rates. The rental rate for the Truax is \$15/acre, plus the \$75 setup fee which includes delivery and pickup.

The Kittson SWCD has a 75 hp Case IH tractor along with an 8 Ft. OTG Truax drill that they use to provide custom seeding to landowners. The rate for this service is \$65 per hour plus a \$100 mobilization fee with a max of 30 acres for service.

The Kittson SWCD has a Trees-R-Us No till tree planter. This planter allows trees to be planted directly into sod. This service is fully operated by the SWCD staff.

The district also has a custom mowing service, this service is mainly designed for spot mowing to control noxious weeds. The rate for mowing is \$65 per hour with a 15-acre maximum.

The SWCD has a UTV mounted sprayer to aid landowners in controlling noxious weeds on their land. The rate for spraying is \$75 per hour plus the cost of chemical.

The district also has a surveying service, this service is mainly utilized for completing a DNR Working in Public Water Permit. Landowners wanting to clean watercourses that are deemed public waters need to have a survey submitted with the permit application of excessing conditions and propose what the work to be completed is going to be before work may begin. The Survey Service rate is \$75/hour and a scope of work determined within the SWCD agreement.

For landowners that are outside of the county and are interested in our services contact the office to discuss your options.

If you are interested in renting one of the drills or have any questions on the services we offer, please stop by the Kittson SWCD office or call at (218)-853-2619 for more information.

Kittson SWCD Watershed Based Implementation Funding

The Kittson SWCD has developed a variety of different programs with the help of the Two Rivers Plus Watershed Based Implementation Funds. From cost sharing on streambank stabilizations, Side Water Inlets, Forest Management Plans to flat rate payments for Non-Structural Land Management practices such as cover crops, and conservation tillage, the Kittson SWCD can assist you with a wide variety of issues that may be happening on the landscape.

The Non-Structural Land Management Program offers a multi-year tiered flat rate incentive payment on a handful of land management practices, including Cover Crops, No-Till, Reduced Tillage, and Strip Till. In order to promote long term adoption of these practices, an incentive for longer term contracts has been added to the program. All contracts max out at 80 Acres.

Incentive Base Rates: 1-Year Contract Rates

Single Species Cover Crop: \$25/acre

Multi-Species Cover Crop: \$50/acre

Conservation Tillage Practices: \$50/acre

2-Year Contract Rates:

Single Species Cover Crop: \$35/acre

Multi-Species Cover Crop: \$60/acre

Conservation Tillage Practices: \$60/acre

3-Year Contract Rates:

Single Species Cover Crop: \$45/acre

Multi-Species Cover Crop: \$70/acre

Conservation Tillage Practices: \$70/acre

The Kittson SWCD has developed this program to encourage Kittson County landowners to try different land management practices. This program has less requirements than the federal programs, so it is easier to enroll in and maintain compliance. As many tree rows in the county are removed, the protection they provided against wind and water erosion is also removed. Land management practices may work better for many farmers than a tree row because they provide protection from wind and water erosion without reducing the number of harvestable acres available.

The Kittson SWCD also offers 75% cost share on Streambank Stabilization, Structural Ag Practices (Side-Water-Inlets), and Forest Management Plans. If you have areas on your ag fields that are starting to develop into gully washouts cutting back into your field, we can offer Technical and Engineering Assistance to come up with a plan and design that will help fix the issues from becoming worse.

If you would like more information about signing up for these programs, please stop by the Kittson SWCD Office or call (218)-853-2619.



Outreach Update Spring 2023

Kittson SWCD Hosts Story Time:

The Kittson SWCD hosted Story Time at the Hallock Public Library in November and December. In November, we learned about the difference between domestic and wild turkeys. In December, we made Christmas trees and learned the difference between a Pine, Spruce, and Fir tree.

Christmas Tree Lesson:



Students at Lancaster School show off their evergreen samples.

The Kittson SWCD visited 1st grade classrooms of Lancaster with Mrs. Leah Muir, Kittson Central with Ms. Kalli Peterson, and Tri-County with Ms. Tara Wiskow. We learned about the history of the Christmas tree tradition and the differences between a Pine, Spruce, and Fir tree. The key is that Pine needles come in bundles, Spruce needles are square, and Fir needles are flat and friendly. The kids enjoyed some sticky hands-on learning.

Livestock Producer's Supper:



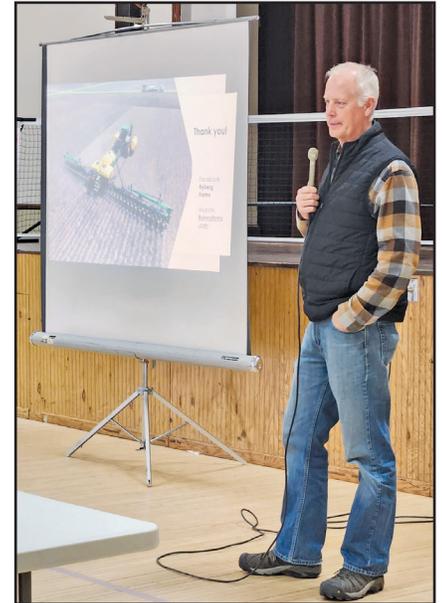
Representative John Burkel addresses participants of the Livestock Producer's Supper in Lancaster, MN.

Kittson County livestock producers were invited to join the SWCD for an informative evening on December 20th at the Lancaster Community Center. CJ Peterson and Joe Wilebski, Kittson SWCD Board Members, and Theresia Gillie, Kittson County Commissioner, gave an update on discussions about the Feedlot Regulatory Program held at the state level and voiced their support for keeping regulation authority local.

Representative John Burkel shared his personal experience with this state program and joined in group discussions. Kelly Turgeon, Manager of the Kittson FSA office, gave an update on their disaster relief programs. Heather Donoho, Outreach Coordinator for Kittson SWCD, provided information on State Feedlot Regulations.

Strip-Till Café Chat

To support our Soil Health Demonstration Project and facilitate discussion about soil health practices, the Kittson SWCD hosted a Strip-till Café Chat January 5th at the Hallock City Hall. Brian Ryberg, of Ryberg Farms, was the presenter. He has been implementing strip-tillage for 8 years with a corn, soybean, and sugarbeets rotation in central Minnesota.



Carbon Credits Café Chat

After receiving in queries about the Carbon Credits Market, staff decided to host the Carbon Credits Café Chat on February 15th at the Hallock City Hall. Presenter Jodi Dejonghughes explained how carbon is stored in the soil and how the new Carbon Credits Market Functions. Jodi has been a Regional Educator with the University of Minnesota Extension for over 25 years. Her area of specialization includes tillage systems, soil compaction, and improving soil health.

Brian Ryberg shares his 8 years of experience with strip-till at the Strip-Till Café Chat.

4-H Snowshoe Adventures:



Youth at Snowshoe Adventures are ready to set out on the trail.

We hosted an outdoor snowshoeing event with Kittson 4-H on February 26th at Lake Bronson State park. Seven youth learned how to snowshoe and played nature bingo.



410 So. 5th St., Suite 106
Hallock, Minnesota 56728-4140
218-853-2619, Ext. 3

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