



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 2025

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

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Specialist- Sky Dahl,
District Administrator-
Jamie Osowski, District
Technician- Jeremy Benson,
District Technician- Trent
Youngstrand

NRCS Staff: NRCS Staff: District
Conservationist- Michael
Steinhauer

**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,
and Administrative Assistant-
Kimberly Soberaski

Two Rivers Watershed District News *In Roseau, Kittson & Marshall Counties*

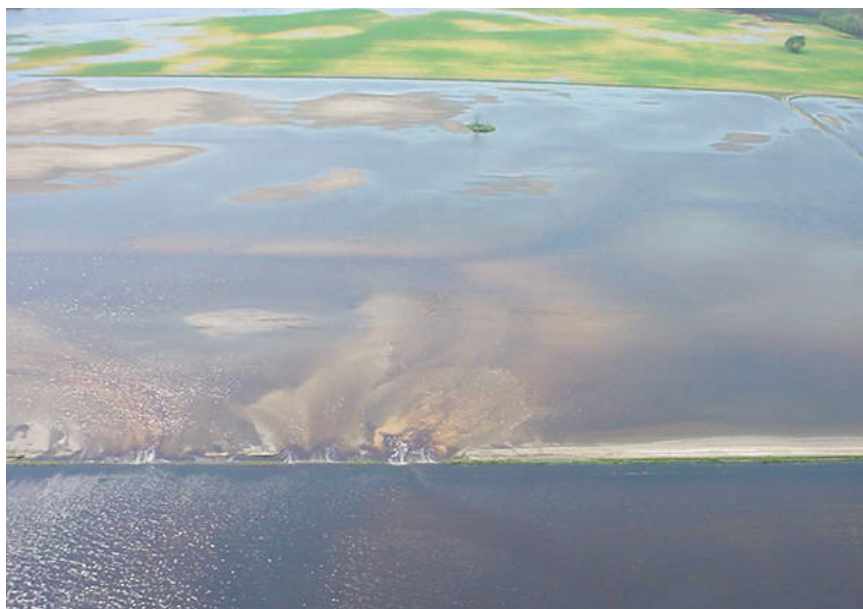
*Board of Managers: President – Rick Sikorski, V.P.- Roger Anderson, Secretary - Daryl Klegstad, Treasurer – Gerald Olsonawski
Manager - Bruce Anderson, Manager - Scott Klein, Manager – Mark Langehaug
Staff: Dan Money, District Administrator; Tyler Coffield, Head Technician*

410 5th St., S., Suite 112, Hallock, MN 56728 • Phone 218-843-3333
Email: dan.money@tworiverswd.com • Website: www.TwoRiversWD.com

Construction To Begin on Klondike Clean Water Retention Project

The Two Rivers Watershed District plans to begin construction activities during the 2025 construction season on the “Klondike Clean Water Retention Project”. This project has been in the planning and development stages dating back to 2009. During this time, a project work team made up of local citizens, local – state – federal government representatives, and other non government organizations worked together to look at both flooding and natural resources problems, consider several alternative plans, and pick the best preferred solution alternative from all perspectives. The Board of Managers of the Two Rivers Watershed proceeded to use the project teams work to develop construction plans, obtain right of way, and secure permits and funding.

This project is located along the Kittson and Roseau County line, approximately 9 miles northeast of Lake Bronson MN and 12 miles northwest of Greenbush, MN. When completed, it will store 34,250 acre feet of floodwaters over a 10 square mile area. For reference, one acre foot is measured as water that covers 1 acre of land at a depth of one foot. One acre foot is equivalent to 325,829 gallons. Therefore, the impoundment will have the ability to store up to 11,159,643,250 gallons of floodwater! This will help to eliminate direct flooding on over 8 square miles of land and reduce the depth



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and duration of flooding on over 25 square miles. The project will provide an adequate outlet for water that comes from an upstream drainage area of 177 square miles, reduce and prevent damages to roads, bridges, culverts, farmsteads, and provide benefits to aquatic and riparian habitats. It is estimated that the Two Rivers' contribution to peak flows at Hallock will be reduced by 11% and at the Red River by 6%.

Project Components

The full project, when completed, will consist of numerous components, including:

- 16.4 miles of earthen embankments to store floodwaters to prevent flooding
- A 5 mile long diked inlet, an additional 2 mile long upstream inlet, 8 miles of diversion channels to direct floodwaters from State Ditch 95 into the impoundment
- Exterior drainage ditches to allow for local drainage and for some of the high flows to bypass the diked inlet
- Two gated inlet structures to direct flows from State Ditch 72 into the diked inlet channel
- One gated bypass structure to control flows into the exterior drainage ditches
- New culverts at 14 different locations at road crossings
- Two gated outlet structures to release water in a controlled manner to the South Branch and to the Middle Branch Two Rivers
- A pilot channel in the interior of the impoundment to connect the inlets and outlet structures to efficiently fill and drain the impoundment

Permits

The TRWD was required to obtain 17 permits for this project, ranging from fairly simple to very complex. These include environmental review, several state and federal wetland permits, alteration to ditches, alteration to roads, and a cultural resources review.

TRWD Hires Administrative Assistant

Kimberly Soberaski joined the Two Rivers Watershed District on April 2nd, 2025 as a part time Administrative Assistant. She will be in the office on Mondays and Wednesdays. Soberaski grew up in Warroad, MN, and graduated from Concordia in Moorhead. She has lived in Hallock, MN, for about fifteen years, where she has been a stay at home mom and substitute teacher before joining the TRWD.

Among her duties, Soberaski will be assisting with bookkeeping, archiving historical watershed district and legal ditch files, assisting with public information, doing data entry and performing general office work. The Board of Managers welcomes her to our staff. If you happen to be in Hallock in the courthouse, stop by our office and say "hi"!

Funding

The project has received \$2.9 million from the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, and this funding will be utilized this year for phase 1a to construct the two outlet structures – one on State Ditch 50 / Middle Branch Two Rivers and the other on State Ditch 95 / tributary to South Branch Two Rivers – and a portion of the main impoundment dike. The project is estimated to significantly reduce sediment, phosphorous and nitrogen levels in the Two Rivers and to increase dissolved oxygen levels. Funding has also been approved from the Red River Watershed Management Board (\$14 million), State of MN (\$0.5 million), and the Two Rivers Watershed District (\$4.1 million). An application to the State of MN has been submitted through the legislative bonding process in the amount of \$17 million.



Construction Phasing

Since this is a very large and complex project, there will be three construction phases. Phase 1a will consist of the two gated outlet structures and a portion of the main dike. This is what is planned for 2025 construction. It is anticipated that construction phases 1b, 2 and 3 will continue over the next 3 to 5 years until the project can be completed. Each phase will provide benefits on its own and subsequent phases will build upon prior phases. More information is available on our website:

<https://tworiverswd.com/Klondike.html>

Red River Watershed Management Board Partners with Regional Farm Organizations

Thousands of years ago, an ancient glacial lake, "Lake Agassiz" dominated northwest Minnesota. As the floodwaters receded, the result was thousands of acres of flat, fertile farmland that is now called the Red River Basin (RRB). However, the flatness of the RRB often results in frequent spring flooding. The last large-scale flood in the RRB occurred in the spring of 2022, with localized and short-term flooding in 2023.

To combat ongoing and frequent flooding, the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) was formed by the Minnesota Legislature in 1976 to provide a basin wide perspective for water management, including flood control. Managed by a board comprised of representatives from each of the seven watershed districts that are members, the RRWMB historically dealt with the flooding problem within the Red River Basin with funding of flood impoundments and farmstead ring dike projects of its membership. Today, its mission has expanded to include water quality and habitat projects.

"We're the voice for northwest Minnesota on water management, flood and natural resources issues," said Robert Sip, RRWMB executive director. "As a regional entity, we're able to work across state boundaries to reduce flood damages, increase water quality and enhance habitat in the RRB as a whole."

For Minnesota agricultural producers, having the RRWMB on their side offers an additional partner to handle water management concerns.

"The RRWMB and its member watershed

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districts play a vital role in our ability to operate” said Tate Petry, secretary/treasurer of the Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers.

“And because we have the RRWMB, we have an extra entity looking out for the best interests of the residents and its farmers and landowners.”

Managing Floods

Since its inception nearly 50 years ago, the RRWMB has funded over 60 flood mitigation projects including impoundments, city flood protection, flood-prone property buyouts, and over 300 farmstead ring dikes. There are 658 farmstead ring dikes in the RRB of Minnesota that were recently mapped.

“Almost every year, flooding is a hurdle that we have to jump over,” said Petry, who farms near Ada. “Flood management projects funded by the RRWMB have been a game changer in how quickly we are able to get in the field in the spring to plant our crops, not to mention allowing us to protect our homes.”

Partners in collaboration

Flood management projects aren't the only programs funded by the RRWMB that benefit farmers. In 2021, the RRWMB contracted with The Sanborn Mapping Company to collect Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data for over 20,000 square miles in northwest Minnesota. LiDAR uses laser pulses to measure elevation/distances and to create 3D models of Earth's surface.

“Now that we've captured elevation data, farmers and landowners can use it for drainage projects,” Sip said. “Over 60 billion data points were delivered, and the new data has an accuracy of approximately less than four inches. The old data only had an accuracy of about six inches.”

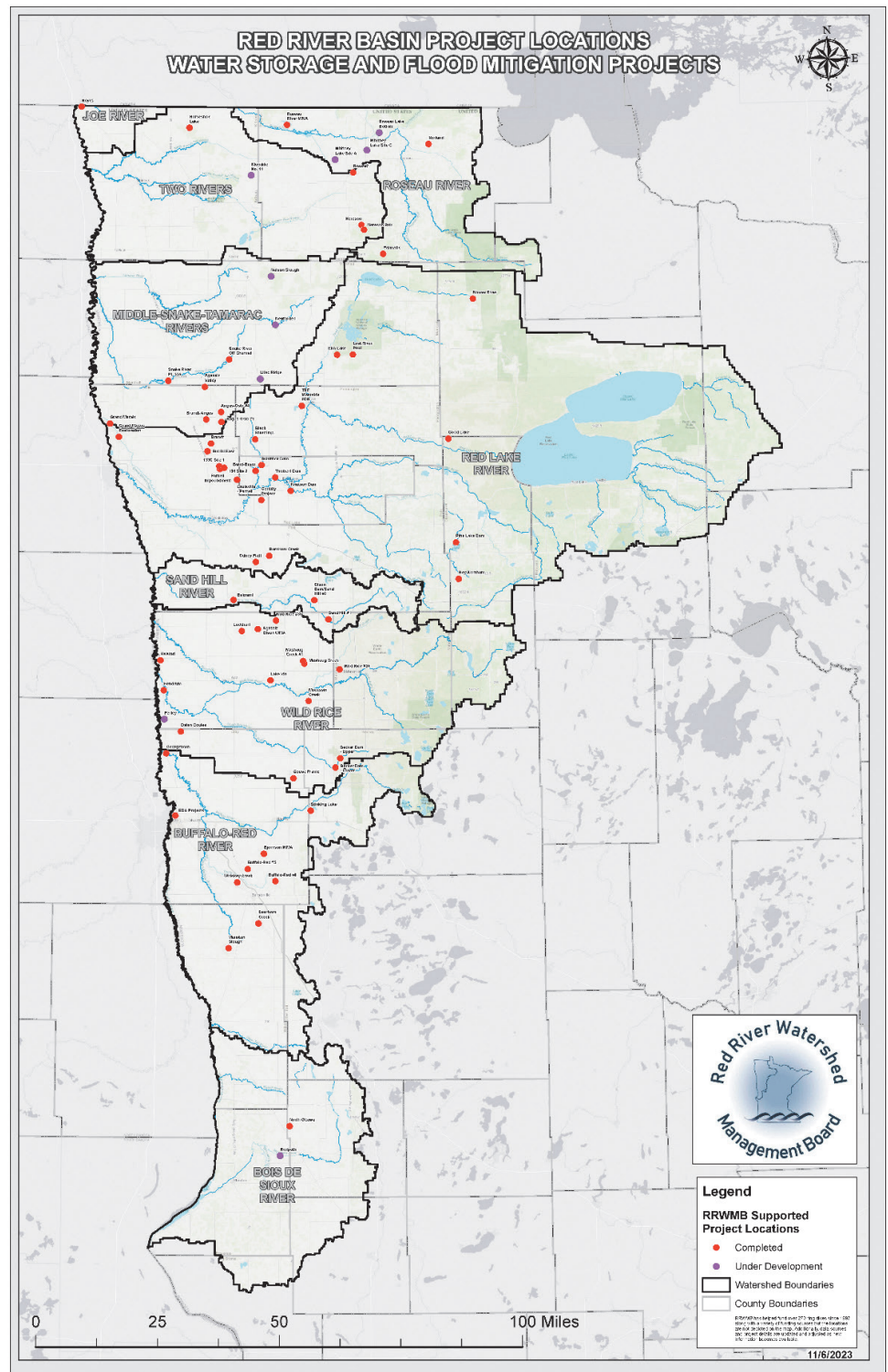
LiDAR data was paid for solely by the RRWMB, its members, counties and non-member watershed districts. No state or federal funds were included in this effort.

In other technical efforts, collecting streamflow data is critical to the RRB and the RRWMB and its membership have partnered with the United States Geological Survey to obtain data for well over two decades. “The information is critical to flood and emergency managers during times of flood,” Sip said.

Education is also a critical aspect of RRWMB's mission, funding programs like the River Watch program and several other initiatives. “We do a lot of partnering and collaborating throughout the Red River Basin region, including helping fund the River Watch program,” Sip said. “It's an educational program for high school students to get them involved with water quality and natural resource issues.”

Advocating at the Capitol in St. Paul is another vital component of the RRWMB. “We're the voice of our members,” Sip said. “We have a full-time lobbying firm that works on behalf of our membership. Whenever a new law or rule is proposed that might affect our members, we have a collective voice. We're a recognizable entity that's able to increase and enhance our communication. This year, we're looking for about \$50 million from the state of Minnesota, if they have a bonding bill.”

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Horseshoe Lake Dam to be Replaced at Skull Lake Wildlife Management Area

The Two Rivers Watershed District has awarded a construction contract to Landwehr Construction from St. Cloud to perform necessary work to replace the dam at Horseshoe Lake, located in the Skull Lake Wildlife Management Area. The work is slated to begin in August 2025 and should conclude by mid September in time for hunting season.

The Horseshoe Lake dam was originally constructed in 1968 under a cooperative project between the Two Rivers Watershed District, MN Department of Natural Resources, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. It was originally planned and constructed to provide flood control, water supply, and natural resources/recreation benefits. The project consisted of a diked embankment to hold a semi-permanent pool of water, an outlet structure consisting of a cement drop box and a culvert through the dike, and an emergency spillway. In 2005 the structure was altered by installing a stop log bay which allowed water levels to be managed to better control flooding and provide habitat. An operating plan was agreed to by the TRWD, DNR and Kittson County to fill the pool during flooding and also during the spring and fall migrations, but to drain it at all other times.



The expected life of the structure was 50 years, and it has outlived its useful life span. After the spring flooding of 2022, a routine inspection found that the culvert through the dike was failing. At that time it was decided by all parties to allow the lake to drain for safety reason and so that the structure could be replaced.

Funding sources were sought out, and the project has been fully funded by the DNR (\$220,000), FEMA (\$82,000), the Red River Watershed Management Board (\$112,365) and the TRWD (\$57,885).

During construction, the public can expect that the access trail will be closed to the public. Access will still be available

from the north and from the south, however the crossing over the structure will not be accessible to travel from north to south. Once the project is finished, the trail will be opened and lake will be filled in in the fall in time for the fall migratory bird migration and waterfowl hunting season. After waterfowl season the lake will be drained to allow for operation during the spring runoff. Any questions on this project can be directed to our office in the Kittson County Courthouse in Hallock, MN or by calling 218-843-3333.



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Two Rivers Watershed District

In Roseau, Kittson, & Marshall Counties



410 5th Street S., Suite 112, Hallock, MN 56728 - Phone (218) 843-3333 - email: tyler.coffield@tworiverswd.com or 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.

Two Rivers Watershed District Permit Application

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

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Email _____

Address _____
Box _____ Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Location of Project:

1/4 Section	1/4 Section	Section	Township	Range	Township Name	County
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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

‘RIFFLES & RUNS’

- News Briefs & Tidbits from Around the Watershed District-

❖ From the MN DNR:

- Lake Bronson Dam Replacement- Construction has begun and the lake is closed. For more information:
https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/lake-bronson-dam-replacement-project.html
- Zebra Mussels: This aquatic invasive species has been discovered in Lake Bronson and the Red River of the North. It is likely but not yet confirmed they are present in the South Branch Two Rivers from Lake Bronson to the Red River. Boaters should use the CLEAN – DRAIN – DRY protocol before and after entering any of these waters.

❖ Water Equivalents:

- Standing water is measured in Acre Feet (AF).
 - One acre foot covers one acre of land one foot deep
 - One acre foot = 325,829 gallons = 43,560 cubic feet
- Flowing water is measured in Cubic Feet per Second (CFS).
 - One CFS = 448.8 gallons per minute = 646,272 gallons per day
- 1,000 Gallons Per Minute = 2.23 CFS = 4.42 Acre Feet Per Day

❖ Water Travel Time:

- A drop of rain that falls on the landscape 15 miles east of Greenbush will take about 5-6 days to travel to the Red River. It will flow in the South Branch Two Rivers through Greenbush, Pelan, Lake Bronson and Hallock on its journey!

❖ Don't Forget Your Permit!

- The Two Rivers Watershed District requires a permit for any activity that will alter or affect the flow of water. If you are installing or removing culverts, ditching, diking, installing tile drainage, or pumping you may need a permit. Please see the insert in this newsletter for more details!

❖ Ditch Improvement Projects:

- The TRWD has received petitions to improve Kittson County Ditch #7 and also Kittson County Ditch #13. These projects have been surveyed and plans are being finalized. The benefitted area of both of these ditches is also being analyzed. Stay tuned for upcoming meetings and public hearings regarding these two drainage systems!

New Employees



Michael Steinhauer

My name is Michael Steinhauer, and I am the new District Conservationist for the NRCS in Kittson County. I have been with the USDA for 21 years. For the last 5 years I have been in the Baudette office (Lake of the Woods/ Koochiching), however I was in Kittson County, working with Jim Schwab, from 2016 to early 2020. I was born and raised in Marshall County and have been living in Roseau County for the past 19 years where I continue to live with my Wife of 23 years and two children (one in college and one soon to leave for college). In my free time, I enjoy hiking, biking, and generally being outdoors. I am glad to be back working in Kittson County as I really enjoyed my time here.

Trent Youngstrand

Hi. My name is Trent Youngstrand and I am the new District Technician at the Kittson SWCD. I will be responsible for subsurface sewage treatment systems and buffer law compliance, as well as helping with planting trees, laying weed barrier fabric, the drill rental program, and whatever else they would like me to do. I will also be working as the new County Agricultural inspector, dealing with seed and noxious weed inspection.

I grew up in Slope County, North Dakota. As a child, I spent a lot of time building and fixing fences, taking care of bottle calves and lambs, and riding in the tractor with my dad or grandpa. My family moved to Newfolden when I was in high school, and I met my wife Sarah (Budziszewski) through the MCC/Tri-County co-op. After I got my bachelor's degree in Agronomy with an Agribusiness minor from the University of Minnesota- Crookston, we moved to Kittson County. I've worked at Carlson Prairie Seed Farm since high school and I am on the township board in Jupiter Township, where my wife and I now live with our son, Henry. Through farming in the area, I've gotten to meet and work with people from all over the county. I am excited to continue those relationships and make new ones here at the SWCD.



Big Thank You to Kittson County Business Support!

One thing that has become very clear over the past year is how much support the businesses in Kittson County show for the Kittson County Soil and Water Conservation District. Over the last year the Kittson SWCD has hosted different events such as Pint Night, Livestock Producer Appreciation Dinner, Envirothon, and Agriculture Safety Day. None of these events would've been possible without the overwhelming support surrounding us. Donations in form of time, money, or supplies

are plentiful and have allowed us to be able to turn them into events that involve and inform our community about anything from conservation construction to tractor safety. We wanted to include a list of businesses that have shown us overwhelming support in the past year to give each and every one a shout out and a big thank you from the Kittson Soil and Water Conservation District!

- American Federal Bank
- C & M ford
- Cenex Farmers Union
- United Valley Bank
- Hallock Eagles
- Karlstad Lions
- Kennedy VFW
- Kittson County Soybean Association
- Kittson County Farm Bureau
- Ag Country Farm Credit Services
- American Crystal
- Podco LLC
- Two Rivers Watershed District
- North Prairie Ag
- Brink Lawyers
- Dahl, Hatton, Muir and Reese LTD
- Steven Sjostrand Agency
- Weleski Hardware
- Lake Bronson Elevator
- True North Equipment

AgBMP Loan Program

The Agriculture Best Management Practice Loan Program (AgBMP Loan) provides low interest loans to farmers and rural landowners. The purpose is to encourage Best Management Practices that prevent or reduce water pollution. Loans can be provided up to \$200,000 with an interest rate of 3%. Money is available for purchase of conservation tillage equipment, septic system upgrades, feedlot improvements, manure handling equipment, structural erosion control and other conservation related practices. New ideas are encouraged to be brought forth for consideration. There are many eligible practices/equipment to be utilized through this program.

Landowners can contact the Kittson SWCD for more information and to receive information on loan applications. Applications will need to provide information about the proposed project to be funded and the desired loan amount. For more information stop by our office in the Kittson County Courthouse or call (218) 853-2619.



MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Kittson County 2024 Total Rainfall

Township & Section	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Arveson 26 - L.	NR	NR	NR	1.91	5.34	4.25	3.23	2.36	3.3	0.66	NR	NR	21.05
Cannon 22 - B. Coffield	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0.00
Clow 21- M. Wiese	NR	NR	NR	NR	3.89	3.08	2.67	3.39	NR	NR	NR	NR	13.03
Caribou 30- B. Woleski	0.34	0.47	0.15	1.6	5.02	4.04	3.72	NR	1.34	NR	1.62	0.8	19.10
Davis 3- J. Dz.	0.22	0.35	NR	1.59	4.10	3.86	3.36	3.47	1.69	0.50	1.28	0.78	21.20
Deerwood 28- K&W.H	NR	NR	NR	1.75	2.72	NR	6.70	3.06	2.07	NR	NR	NR	16.30
Deerwood 4- S.B.	NR	NR	NR	0.90	4.78	3.53	5.38	3.08	1.83	NR	NR	NR	19.50
Granville 13 - B. L.	0.34	0.5	0.36	1.68	5.02	3.41	3.53	2.73	1.10	0.78	1.59	1.39	22.43
Hallock 12- KOC Science Class	NR	NR	NR	1.47	3.67	3.66	3.81	3.26	NR	NR	NR	NR	15.87
Hampden 24 - C'w. N.	NR	NR	NR	1.27	3.81	2.63	2.54	1.89	1.44	0.57	NR	NR	14.15
Hazelton 22- T.A.	NR	NR	NR	1.63	5.10	3.73	3.88	3.42	1.28	0.74	NR	NR	19.78
Jupiter 27- J.S	NR	NR	NR	1.70	3.94	4.16	4.90	2.80	0.80	0.24	NR	NR	18.54
Hill 5 - B. D.	0.57	0.43	0.2	1.49	4.24	3.98	2.85	2.65	0.99	0.78	2.04	1.60	21.82
North Red River 9 - B.	0.31	0.24	0.02	1.14	3.19	4.32	2.57	3.20	1.62	0.55	0.49	0.71	18.36
Percy 14 - A. J.	NR	NR	NR	NR	5.18	3.99	3.50	3.01	1.01	NR	NR	NR	16.69
Poppleton 02 - C.P.	NR	NR	NR	1.70	4.54	3.43	4.06	3.20	NR	NR	NR	NR	16.93
Poppleton 11- D.A.	NR	NR	NR	1.82	4.85	3.54	3.55	3.44	1.33	0.81	NR	NR	19.34
Richardville 36- J.L	NR	NR	NR	1.76	4.25	3.47	4.13	2.92	1.62	NR	NR	NR	18.15
Richardville 10 - J.P.	0.56	0.53	0.93	1.88	4.96	3.13	3.46	2.81	2.16	0.79	1.89	1.62	24.72
St. Joseph 4 - J. W.	NR	NR	NR	1.73	5.04	3.36	4.17	3.01	2.29	0.82	1.7	NR	22.12
St. Vincent 2 - A.H.	NR	NR	NR	1.61	4.53	3.43	3.21	2.74	3.18	0.69	2.08	NR	21.47
St. Vincent 10- S.S	0.55	0.56	0.46	1.47	4.24	3.62	2.98	2.11	2.47	0.77	2.71	1.83	23.77
St. Vincent 24 - N.W.	NR	NR	NR	NR	4.33	3.10	2.06	2.47	NR	NR	NR	NR	11.96
Skane 5 - M. S.	0.47	0.07	0.78	1.33	NR	3.23	2.88	3.16	1.64	0.75	2.03	0.66	17.00
South Red River 1 - N.	NR	NR	NR	1.21	4.20	3.65	2.69	3.02	1.95	0.55	1.65	NR	18.92
Spring Brook 25 - J.D.	NR	NR	0.19	1.68	NR	3.60	6.28	3.40	1.78	NR	NR	NR	16.93
Svea 23- K.K	NR	0.45	0	1.43	3.14	2.97	NR	3.18	1.45	0.56	1.43	0.72	15.33
Taen 12 - C. M.	NR	NR	NR	2.10	NR	2.09	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	4.19
Tegner 20- R.G.	NR	NR	NR	1.54	3.97	2.99	2.79	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0.72
Tegner 31- Kennedy	0.41	NR	NR	1.78	4.28	3.63	2.74	3.83	1.51	0.70	NR	NR	17.42
Thompson 12 - Markit	NR	NR	NR	1.34	4.35	3.66	2.78	3.13	1.32	0.84	NR	NR	16.86
Norway 20- M.C	NR	NR	NR	1.59	3.71	3.15	4.64	2.71	0.84	0.54	NR	NR	17.18
Mckinley 30- S.A.	NR	NR	NR	1.32	2.16	3.83	3.90	3.76	1.05	0.84	NR	NR	16.86
Avg Rainfall Monitors	0.54	0.60	0.33	2.84	7.21	4.72	4.54	3.36	1.96	0.81	2.56	1.44	30.97
NR - No Report													16.89

The Kittson SWCD is partnered with the Minnesota State Climatology Network working through local volunteers to gather rainfall data throughout our county. These volunteers agree to use the provided rain gauge and accurately record the rainfall amounts daily. This information is then compiled into a graph so it's easily readable. We currently have 33 rainfall readers throughout Kittson County. This

has grown incredibly from the 7 that the program started with! Although we welcome anybody to join the program, we are really looking for readers in the following townships: Peatland, Klondike, Norway, and Pelan. If you are in any of those townships and are interested in more information, don't hesitate to reach out to the staff at the Kittson SWCD!

Feedlot Registration

A 4-year Cycle

It's that time again, time to re-register your feedlots! According to Minn. R. 7020.0350 subp. 4 it requires individuals to update feedlot registration information every four years. In Kittson County we have 24 feedlots required to be registered. This year 15 out of those 24 are up for re-registration. What year you re-register is dependent on what year you initially registered.

How do I know if I need to re-register? The Kittson County Certified Feedlot Officer, Sky Dahl, sent out letters to all 15 feedlots informing them that they needed to re-register sometime in 2025. If you are a registered feedlot and did not receive a letter, you most likely are not due to re-register yet. However, Sky will be sending additional letters out to those that have not been in contact in the next month.

What information is needed to re-register? It is very quick and easy to re-register because the information needed is minimal. If nothing has changed since the last registration period, then you state that, and the registration

is just carried over with the same information. However, if you have added or subtracted animals then you will update your registration to reflect that change. If you have added a partner or additional contact for your feedlot this is when you could add them, and they will start getting any correspondence from the Kittson CFO.

How do I re-register? With the letter sent out, there was also a data collection form that could have been filled out with up-to-date information and mailed back to the Kittson SWCD. From there the CFO will enter that information and re-register for the producer. If producers prefer, they can self-re-register online as well. The new online registration system can be found at <https://webapp.pca.state.mn.us/feedlot-registration/login>. You must register an account using an email address, then you will be able to search your feedlot by name and update your information online. If anybody runs into any problems, they can certainly call the office at 218-853-2619 and Sky can assist with online registrations.

Help the pollinators so they can help you!

While the melting of the snow and the chirping of the birds signifies the start of spring, there are so many other factors that we don't think about happening behind the scenes. One of the big things happening without us noticing right away is the pollinators, such as honeybees and butterflies, becoming active again after a long winter. Most pollinators spend the winter hibernating to survive the cold. They burrow underground in holes in wood, or they nest in debris in your yard like piles of leaves or dead vegetation.

These pollinators are crucial to our ecosystem, three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world's food crops depend on these pollinators to reproduce. Without these pollinators, food production would experience a detrimental drop. Crop yields would decrease dramatically, and the flowering plants you see around the countryside wouldn't be the same anymore. Pollinators have been

experiencing intense hardships these past couple of years. They are facing habitat loss, diseases, parasites, and other environmental contaminants that are contributing to a rapid decline in different pollinators species.

There are multiple ways we can help pollinators as individuals. There are some very simple tasks such as planting pollinator attractive native plants like milkweed, aster, goldenrod, wild bergamot, lupine, purple prairie clover, and anise hyssop. These are all native to Minnesota and perennials meaning they will continue to grow year after year. There are also a few annual flowers you could incorporate in your flower beds that are highly attractive to pollinators like cosmos, butter daisy, and the moss rose. On a larger scale, wildflower or pollinator plantings are fabulous ways to improve habitat. Many places sell special pollinator seed mixes that contain 40 to 60 percent wildflowers and 40-60 percent

native grasses. Although these grasses don't provide nectar for the pollinators, they provide shelter and nesting habitat for them. Not only are these plantings immensely helpful for the pollinators, but they are also attractive to the eye and add great diversity to gardens, parks, and yards big or small. In the fall while preparing your yard for the winter, consider leaving some plant stems in your flower bed, or that pile of leaves that never seemed to blow away. These areas become a winter pollinator nesting habitat and if they are cleared up the pollinators may not have a chance to find another spot to hibernate resulting in a very low chance of them surviving throughout winter.

Taking initiative and planting a wildflower patch or leaving a pile of leaves in the fall may seem like a small act, but it can make a big impact on the pollinator population overall. Think about this while you are getting your yard summer ready this spring!



Kittson SWCD Services

SEEDING SERVICE-TRACTOR AND DRILL HIRING

- 0-30 Acres.....\$100 mobilization + 65/hour

TRUAX DRILL RENTAL

- In county.....\$75 delivery + \$15/acre
- **There is a minimum charge of the delivery fee plus 1 acre**

TREE PLANTINGS

- SWCD Mechanical Planting.....\$1.50/tree
- Handplanting.....\$2.50/tree
- Tube/stake Installation.....\$2.50/each
- Tree Fabric.....\$0.60/Linear Foot
- **There is a \$250 minimum charge for all tree plantings and fabric installation**

SURVEYING SERVICE

- In county.....\$75/hour
- **There will be a \$200 minimum on all surveying services**



218-853-2619



410 5th St S, Hallock



MN 56728

www.kittsonswcd.org

**KITTSOON SOIL
AND WATER
CONSERVATION**

2024 Outreach & Education Update

Christmas Tree Lesson



Christmas tree history lesson with Kittson County 1st graders.

Livestock Producer Dinner



Informative and delicious livestock producer dinner in January!

Crop Improvement Day



Kittson SWCD had a booth at the MN Wheat Growers Crop Improvement Day!

See Outreach Continued on page 14



Ag Exploration with Kittson County 4-H. Awesome presentation on wildlife from the MN DNR!



2024-2025 Photo Contest

The Kittson SWCD hosts a monthly photo contest via social media. It runs the length of each month allowing for submissions to be emailed to kittsonswcd@gmail.com. The photos are then posted to the Facebook page and the audience votes for their favorite by “liking” that photo. This year each of the monthly winners received desk top calendars containing the winning photos from the past year! We ask that the photos fit the theme of conservation, natural resources, or agriculture. We also ask that the photos be taken in Kittson County and not include portraits of people. Take a look to see some of the previous winners!



October 2024
Monica Yepez Halvorson



November 2024
Dawn Olsonawski



December 2024
Diane Younggren

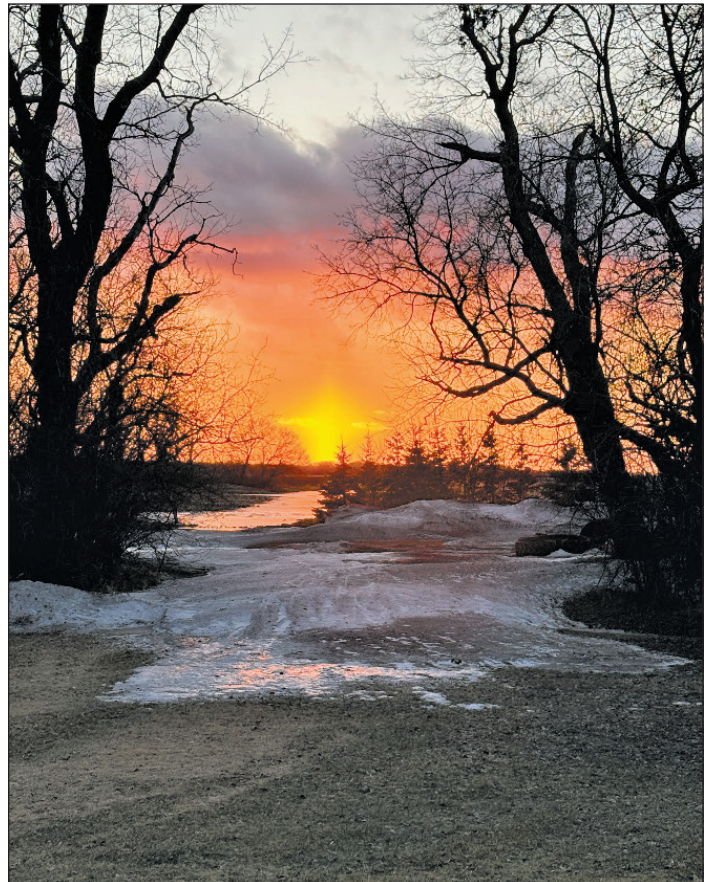
2024-2025 Photo Contest



January 2025
Diane Younggren



February 2025
Rustee Weleski



March 2025
Kim Dahl

Kittson SWCD Scholarships

The Kittson SWCD is proud to have been able to offer \$500 college scholarships for graduating Kittson County seniors this spring! We had a large number of applications sent in before the April 1st deadline. To apply, students had to fill out an application and write a short essay on how they

plan to give back to the community with their degree. There was no GPA minimum nor was there a certain field of study the student had to be going into. We believe that every career in our small community is equally important to the success and growth of our county.

Three Keys to Successful Grass/Forb Seeding

You have buffers to establish? CRP? Pollinators? Establishing a stand of grass requires proper planning and attention to detail. Three keys to successful grass seeding are below. Adhering to these guidelines will greatly improve your chances of a successful grass stand.

- Seeding Date
- Seedbed
- Seed Placement

Key #1 – Seeding Date

Grasses should be seeded when soil moisture and temperature are optimum for germination. Grasses are designated either “cool” or “warm” season based on their growth cycle. Following are recommended planting dates for cool-season and warm-season grasses in the Northern Great Plains:

Key #2 - Seedbed

A proper seedbed is firm and free of competing vegetation. Correct firmness is when an adult footprint is only slightly visible on the prepared bed prior to the seeding operation. A firm seedbed is essential for proper seeding depth. A loose, fluffy bed will place seeds too deep for proper germination. Most seedings are too deep if you cannot see a few seeds on the soil surface.

Key #3 – Seed Placement

The seeding equipment should provide proper seed depth, uniform

SEEDING DATES	
Cool-Season Grasses	Warm-Season Grasses
• Spring: April 1st to June 15th	• Spring: May 15th to June 30th
• Late Summer: July 15th to Spet. 1st	• Late Summer: NOT RECOMMENDED
• Dormant (w/approval): Nov. 1st to Freeze Up	• Dormant (w/approval): Nov. 1st to Freeze Up

seeding rate, and good seed to soil contact. Grass seed can be broadly categorized into three types; fluffy or chaffy, smooth small seed, and smooth large seed. Grass drills are equipped with separate boxes to properly place and meter each of the three seed types. Picker wheels and agitators in the fluffy/chaffy box and oversized feeder tubes keep rough coated seed flowing evenly. Depth bands on grass drills are essential for planting depth control. Press/packer wheels contribute to close seed/soil contact. Free flowing grass seed (e.g. wheatgrass) can be successfully

planted with a small grain drill if proper, shallow, and consistent seeding depth is maintained.

Drills should be calibrated to monitor seeding rate. Seeding rate can be determined by counting dropped seeds after traveling a given distance on a hard surface, collecting seed from openers after traveling a given distance, or turning the drive wheel on the drill and collecting seed from openers. Broadcasting seed can also work, but requires 1.5 times the seed as the drilled rate. Contact the local NRCS office for additional information.

FSA Updates:

Emergency Commodity Assistance Program - payments to offset increased input costs, market decline

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing up to \$10 billion directly to agricultural producers through the Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) for the 2024 crop year. Administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), ECAP will help agricultural producers mitigate the impacts of increased input costs and falling commodity prices.

Authorized by the American Relief Act, 2025, these economic relief payments are based on planted and prevented planted crop acres for eligible commodities for the 2024 crop year. They can visit fsa.usda.gov/ecap to apply using a login.gov account or contact their local FSA office to request an application once the signup period opens.

Producer Eligibility

Eligible producers must report 2024 crop year planted and prevented planted acres to FSA on an FSA-578, Report of Acreage form. Producers who have not previously reported 2024 crop year acreage or filed a notice of loss for prevented planted crops must submit an acreage report by the Aug. 15, 2025, deadline. Eligible producers can visit fsa.usda.gov/ecap for eligibility and payment details

Applying for ECAP

Producers must submit ECAP applications to their local FSA county office by Aug. 15, 2025. Only one application is required for all ECAP eligible commodities nationwide. ECAP applications can be submitted to FSA in-person, electronically using Box and One-Span, by fax or by applying online at fsa.usda.gov/ecap utilizing a secure login.gov account.

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

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract holders are encouraged to transition their 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 at 218-843-2692 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Before You Break Out New Ground, Ensure Your Farm Meets Conservation Compliance

The term "sodbusting" is used to identify the conversion of land from native vegetation to commodity crop production after December 23, 1985. As part of the conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, if you're proposing to produce agricultural commodities (crops that require annual tillage including one pass planting operations and sugar cane) on land that has been determined highly erodible and that has no crop history prior to December 23, 1985, that land must be farmed in accordance with a conservation plan or system that ensures no substantial increase in soil erosion.

Eligibility for many USDA programs requires compliance with a conservation plan or system on highly erodible land (HEL) used for the production of agricultural commodities. This includes Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan, disaster assistance, safety net, price support, and conservation programs; Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs; and Risk Management Agency (RMA) Federal crop insurance.

Before you clear or prepare areas not presently under production for crops that require annual tillage, you are required to file Form AD-1026 "Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification," with FSA indicating the area to be brought into production. The notification will be referred to NRCS to determine if the field is considered highly erodible land. If the field is considered HEL, you are required to implement a conservation plan or system that limits the erosion to the tolerable soil loss (T) for the predominant HEL soil on those fields.

In addition, prior to removing trees or conducting any other land manipulations that may affect wetlands, remember to update form AD-1026, to ensure you remain in compliance with the wetland conservation provisions.

Prior to purchasing or renting new cropland acres, it is recommended that you check with your local USDA Service Center to ensure your activities will be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions.

For additional information on highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation compliance, contact your local USDA Service Center.

Applying for Farm Storage Facility Loans

The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to help you build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for

See FSA Updates
Continued on page 19

eligible commodities.

Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement, loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 may require additional security, and loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.

You do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

For more information, contact the Kittson County USDA Service Center at 218-843-2692 or visit fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport.

USDA Farm Loan Program Changes Now in Effect

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) updates to the Farm Service

Agency's (FSA) Farm Loan Programs are officially in effect. These changes, part of the Enhancing Program Access and Delivery for Farm Loans rule, are designed to increase financial flexibility for agricultural producers, allowing them to grow their operations, boost profitability, and build long-term savings.

These program updates reflect USDA's ongoing commitment to supporting the financial success and resilience of farmers and ranchers nationwide, offering critical tools to help borrowers manage their finances more effectively.

What the new rules mean for you:

- **Low-interest installment set-aside program:** Financially distressed borrowers can now defer up to one annual loan payment at a reduced interest rate. This simplified option helps ease financial pressure while keeping farming operations running smoothly.
- **Flexible repayment terms:** New repayment options give borrowers the ability to increase their cash flow and build working capital reserves, allowing for long-term financial planning that

includes saving for retirement, education, and other future needs.

- **Reduced collateral requirements:** FSA has lowered the amount of additional loan security needed for direct farm loans, making it easier for borrowers to leverage their existing equity without putting their personal residence at risk.

These new rules provide more financial freedom to borrowers. By giving farmers and ranchers better tools to manage their operations, we're helping them build long-term financial stability. It's all about making sure they can keep their land, grow their business, and invest in the future.

If you're an FSA borrower or considering applying for a loan, now is the time to take advantage of these new policies. We encourage you to reach out to your local FSA farm loan staff to ensure you fully understand the wide range of loan making and servicing options available to assist with starting, expanding, or maintaining your agricultural operation.

To conduct business with FSA, please contact your local USDA Service Center.

Northern Pod Technical Service Area (TSA)

As the intensity and frequency of severe storm events increase, so does the amount of overland erosion, as heavier rainfall leads to greater surface runoff, which in turn has a higher potential to erode soil across the landscape. When a storm brings heavy rainfall, the ground becomes saturated quickly, causing more water to flow across the surface as runoff instead of infiltrating into the soil. This increased runoff volume flows faster across the terrain, carrying more soil particles with it, leading to greater erosion. On steeper slopes, the increased runoff velocity further exacerbates erosion potential.

Key factors contributing to increased overland erosion with severe storms:

- **Rainfall intensity:** Higher rainfall rates during a storm result in more rapid surface runoff.
- **Soil conditions:** Soils with low infiltration capacity and that are compacted are more prone to erosion during heavy rain events.
- **Land cover:** Areas with less vegetation or disturbed ground experience higher erosion rates.

Impact of overland erosion:

- **Sedimentation in waterways:** Eroded soil can accumulate in rivers and lakes, impacting water quality, water transportation, and aquatic ecosystems.
- **Damage to infrastructure:** Sediment buildup can clog drainage systems and damage roads and bridges.
- **Loss of topsoil:** Erosion removes fertile topsoil,

impacting agricultural productivity.

The national average for soil loss each year in the U.S. is 4.63 tons per acre per year. The estimated economic loss due to overland soil erosion for the U.S. is \$44 billion per year. In the Midwest, since the beginning of traditional farming (approximately 150 years) an estimated 57 billion tons of soil has been lost. Last year the statewide MnDOT average unit price for common topsoil used on road construction projects was \$50 per ton. If you multiply \$50 per ton by the national average 4.63 tons per acre per year of soil loss, that is a \$231.50 loss per acre per year. The engineering staff with the SWCD utilize engineering practices and standards put forth by NRCS and BWSR to help mitigate overland erosion and help landowners keep their soil and one of their most important assets from being lost.

The Kittson SWCD and the North Pod Engineering Team are here to assist you in keeping the soil on your property. When a vegetative fix is not the solution that is when the engineering team is requested to bring their toolbox of engineering solutions to the table. These solutions typically consist of grassed waterways, side water inlet pipes, grade stabilization "drop" structures, water and sediment control basins (WASCBs), lined outlets and waterways, streambank and shoreline protection projects. The North Pod Engineering Team consists of Justin Muller, Matt Sorvig, and Logan Handyside. They serve the nine northwest Soil and Water Conservation Districts and are based out of the Pennington SWCD Office.



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

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