2017 ANNUAL PLAN

MARTIN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Martin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
923 North State Street, Suite 110
Fairmont, Minnesota 56031
Telephone – 507.235.6680
Web Site – www.martinswcd.net

SWCD Board of Supervisors
Larry Cowing – Nomination District One
Linda Meschke – Nomination District Two
Judy Beckman – Nomination District Three
Clair Schmidt, Jr – Nomination District Four
Tyler Ask – Nomination District Five

SWCD Staff
Ashley Brenke – District Manager
Dustin Benes – District Technician
Greg Johanson – Farm Bill Specialist
Rich Perrine – Wetland Conservation Act/Water Plan Technician
Jesse Walters – Outreach Coordinator

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Betsy Norland – District Conservationist
Ben Cottrell – Soil Conservationist

County Commissioner Liaison
Steve Flohrs

Regular Meeting Day:
Second Thursday of the Month
9:00 a.m.

Meeting Site:
Martin SWCD Office
Arthur Andrews Office Park
923 North State Street, Suite 110
Fairmont, Minnesota 56031

Following is the Annual Plan of Work for the Martin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). This plan covers the period January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017.

The mission of Martin SWCD is to **"assist land users of Martin County in efficiently utilizing the soil and water resources of our county. The District will assist land users in increasing the productive use of cropland, pastureland, woodland, and urban land (small cities) while maintaining the soils base, water quality, tree production and wildlife production".**

Martin Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Plan is developed from the Martin County Comprehensive Water Plan. This Plan has been adopted as the Comprehensive Plan for Martin SWCD. Included in this Annual Plan for 2017 are:

- Efficient District Operation
- Priority Concerns
- Specific Actions and Objectives
- 2017 Budget
- Staffing Needs
- State Cost-Share Program Requirements
- Educational Activities

Following each Priority Concern are the Goals, Objectives and Actions for each concern.

Below is a narrative of projects and programs that will be priority items in 2017.

Martin SWCD will partner with NRCS on cover crop and soil health initiatives, especially in the Elm, Center, and South Creek Watersheds, and will promote continuous living cover.

Martin SWCD will also partner with NRCS to implement the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) in the Elm Creek Watershed, a priority watershed for the District. The Elm Creek Advisory Board, which is made up of landowners and producers in the Elm Creek Watershed, University of Minnesota staff and graduate students, and local government, has been meeting to coordinate activities in the Watershed. Meetings will continue in 2017 and coordination and cooperation will continue. Martin SWCD will also partner with the University on streambank restorations and surface water treatment projects (saturated buffers, treatment wetlands, etc.) in the Elm Creek Watershed.

Another priority is the Dutch Creek Watershed. This watershed is the upland area to the City of Fairmont and Hall Lake. Our goal is to treat the upland areas of the watershed with buffers and water storage. The District will continue to work with the City of Fairmont, the Fairmont Lakes Foundation, and landowners in Dutch Creek to secure funding for water storage in the watershed to protect Fairmont's drinking water source.

Martin SWCD staff will also implement the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan for Martin County, the State of Minnesota Buffer Initiative, and the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program.

Martin SWCD will partner with the Minnesota Pollution Agency and neighboring LGUs on the WRAPS process, which has begun in the Des Moines River and the Watonwan River watersheds. The WRAPS process will start in the Blue Earth River Watershed in 2017.

An important part of accomplishing the Priority Concerns, Goals, Objectives and Actions outlined in this plan is to provide for effective and efficient District operation.

- Hold regular board meetings the second Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m.
- Develop a 2017 Budget and 2017 Annual Plan of Work.
- Submit 2016 Financial Reports to BWSR.
- Staff a District Manager, Farm Bill Assistant, District Technician, Outreach Coordinator, and WCA/Water Plan Technician. Seek summer interns and seasonal staff and volunteers for grant programs.
- Provide or seek training for all personnel and supervisors to carry out the SWCD's programs and develop annual training plans for staff.
- Conduct employee evaluations and update job descriptions.
- Supervisors will review policies and develop priorities.
- Participate in various organizations to enhance our local programming. These organizations include but are not limited to the following: Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA), South Central Technical Service Area (TSA), Martin County Water Plan Advisory Board, Area VI MASWCD, South Central Drainage group, conservation clubs and local lake associations.
- Actively pursue grants for projects and funding for the District.
- Attend MASWCD Convention, Area VI MASWCD Meetings, BWSR Academy and other training/informational sessions.
- Participate in and coordinate the USDA Local Work Group.
- Increase the use of technology by training staff.
- Hold weekly staff meetings.
- Utilize network to expand referral capacity.
- Provide high quality experience for customers.
- Improve internal systems (ex: technology needs and resources).
- Develop and implement organizational outreach and communication strategy.
- Explore new partnerships that can improve customer experience and program delivery.

Priority Concern 1: Surface Water

Goal 1: Surface Water Quality - To improve the quality of all surface waters throughout Martin County with an emphasis on impaired TMDL listed waters to a level that allows them to be delisted.

Objective A: Continue and develop upon public outreach and education programming regarding impaired waters and their impact on public health and recreation.

- Develop one impaired waters fact sheet and host one impaired waters tour each year.
- Disseminate information related to impaired waters through radio, meetings, mailings, news articles, County Fair, and the Conservation Update. Reach 500 people/year with mailings, 2,000 people/year with the Conservation Update.
- Have four Water Plan Advisory Committee meetings/year.
- Collaborate with stakeholders; local, state and federal agencies; and other partners on monitoring and assessment and implementation efforts, especially with MPCA's Watershed Approach.
- Continue to work with the University of Minnesota and others to research, design and adapt BMPs to local conditions (ex. Roberts bioreactor/treatment wetland research site).
- Support legislation to provide additional funding, including to the local level, to implement practices that improve impaired waters.
- Provide education and assistance with terrestrial invasive species removal at one event per year.
- Work with new models and Implement Precision Conservation Practices across all watersheds.
- Host Environmental Awareness Day for every 5th grader in Martin County and implement the 1st Grade Tree Program in every Martin County Elementary School
- Establish citizen stream and citizen lake monitors.
- Establish comprehensive water quality monitoring.

Objective B: Address the implementation goals as stated for TMDL listed waters. Reduce nitrate, phosphorous, and sediment concentrations in all county waterbodies.

- Implement practices under TMDL plans as they are approved.
- Increase the number of farms using cover crops and reduce till/no till practices by using EQIP.
- Install structural BMP's, specifically on areas adjacent to waterbodies.
- Use buffers and grassed waterways in areas subject to overland flow, frequent flooding.

- Install wetland restorations and catch basins to slow/stop runoff to allow for denitrification and sediment settling prior to entering the waterbody.
- Catch/retain tile water before entering a waterbody, providing pretreatment with woodchip bioreactors, saturated buffers, wetland treatment or other methods that can be adapted to the site.
- Identify open tile intakes.
- Work with landowners to alter open tile intakes per year by utilizing alternative intakes, vegetative buffers or removal techniques.
- Install field windbreaks to reduce wind erosion.

Objective C: Reduce impacts to surface water from urban areas and impervious surfaces.

- Convert unneeded impervious areas to natural habitat utilizing local ecotype native plant materials at one site/year.
- Plan and install storm water treatment practices (ex: SAFL baffle) within urban areas to reduce direct impacts from untreated runoff reaching surface water bodies, 1 practice/year.
- Encourage and provide incentives for the use of urban BMPs, 15 BMPs/year
- Protect soil on construction sites using all available BMPs to prevent soil delivery to storm sewers or surface waters by informing local contractors.

Goal 2: Surface Water Quantity – Reduce peak flow events to help prevent erosion and maintain the integrity of crop fields.

Objective A: Decrease the amount of surface runoff entering waterbodies.

- Identify priority water storage areas throughout the watershed using GIS.
- Implement Martin County's Multipurpose Drainage Management Plan
- Utilize catch basins to hold surface runoff and allow some of it to percolate thus reducing the amount of runoff entering the waterbody.
- Increase the number of wetland restorations, specifically upstream of or near waterbodies with historically high peak flow events, to reduce the volume of water entering the waterbody.
- Integrate the use of cover crops and reduced till/ no till practices. *See Action 1.1.B.ii
- Provide incentives and cost-share assistance for farmers to adopt Continuous Living Cover practices on their row crop acres.
- Utilize local ecotype native plants on non-row crop acres to reduce erosion and runoff and facilitate infiltration.

Objective B: Decrease the impact of peak flow events regarding erosion and flooding of nearby crop fields.

- Utilize the work of Presnail and others who have designed models to help identify and prioritize sites where implementation work is needed.
- Stabilize streambanks and floodplains by using native plantings.
- Manage woody debris within the stream/ditch channel to reduce bank erosion and direct flow away from eroding banks.
- Utilize programs to obtain funding to install riparian buffers within the watersheds experiencing numerous high flow events.

Goal 3: Surface water drinking water supply – Meet drinking water requirements on Budd Lake.

Objective A: Continue to improve the water quality on Budd Lake to a level that is acceptable for use as Fairmont's drinking water supply.

- Develop a monitoring system for the surface waterways within the Chain of Lakes watershed feeding into Budd Lake.
- Locate point-source pollution areas within the watershed and remedy the situations as needed by utilizing programs to obtain funding.
- Develop community outreach activities to educate the public regarding practices to protect the Fairmont Chain of Lakes. Present to Fairmont schools once/year.
- Utilize the results of monitoring, watershed analysis, and site visits to develop a Source Water Protection Plan/comprehensive plan for the Fairmont Chain of Lakes Watershed. Collaborate with stakeholders and project partners.
- Apply for funding to implement the Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Watershed Plan, including special projects and accelerated implementation activities.
- Develop outreach materials to educate private landowners within the watershed (rural and urban) on better management practices (BMP) to protect the surface waters in the watershed.
- Increase buffers on any water bodies within the watershed.
- Add catch basins onto the creeks and streams within the watershed to allow sediments to settle out before entering the lakes.

Priority Concern 2: Groundwater

Goal 1: Groundwater Quality - Reduce contaminant pathways to the groundwater supply in order to maintain/improve the groundwater quality.

Objective A: Eliminate pathways for contaminants to easily reach groundwater. Protect and improve groundwater so it is fit for human consumption and other uses.

- Seal 20 abandoned wells/year. Continue to seek cost-share funds and grant funds as needed.
- Assist with the implementation of Wellhead Protection Plans for all public water supplies in the county.
- Integrate the use of cover crops and reduced till/ no till practices. *See Action 1.1.B.ii
- Set and encourage the use of guidelines for appropriate use of chemicals on cropland, urban lawns, and across the landscape to decrease the amount of contaminants entering the groundwater supply.

Goal 2: Groundwater Quantity – Increase the groundwater supply

Objective A: Improve conditions for infiltration and groundwater recharge.

- Establish local ecotype native vegetation in wetlands, on buffers and in upland areas across the landscape to provide deep root systems and help build soil structure to efficiently move surface water through the topsoil, subsoil and into surficial aquifers.
- Increase the amount of crop residue covering the surface of annually cropped land and leave root systems in the ground over winter to help hold the residue in place.
- Integrate the use of cover crops and reduced till/ no till practices. *See Action 1.1.B.ii
- Encourage the use of continuous living cover as part of no-till cropping systems to keep living roots in the ground, increase residue on the surface and to help keep the residue anchored .
- Monitor 5 DNR observation wells 8 times/year.

Goal 3: Groundwater Drinking Supply – Maintain or Improve the quality of our drinking water and work to maintain an adequate supply for all recognized uses.

Objective A: Protect aquifers being used for drinking water and work to protect wellhead areas.

- Utilize all action items listed under Groundwater Quality and Groundwater Quantity Goals to maintain or improve the quality of drinking and maintain an adequate supply.

- Promote the use of deep rooted perennial cover within wellhead protection areas. Encourage the use of perpetual easements and other programs to expand the protection area and develop an adequate buffer. Finalize 2 conservation easements in wellhead protection areas.
- Encourage private well owners to test their drinking water regularly to detect any type of contamination. Have brochures at the County Fair and at the office.
- Educate landowners on the importance of establishing a wellhead protection area around their private well and encourage the use of local ecotype native plants within that area. Host one public event focused on groundwater.
- Encourage landowners to avoid activities within their wellhead protection area and maintain setbacks from potential pollution sources such as septic systems, fuel tanks, and chemical storage.

Cost-Share Program Requirements

Martin SWCD FY 2017 cost-share allocation grant is $17,000. The District will use 80% of the amount, $13,600 for high priority projects. Typical cost-shared practices include stormwater control systems, field windbreaks, grassed waterways and well sealing. The remaining 20% of the amount, $3,400 will be used for cost-share services (technical and administrative) as allowed by program guidelines.

The District Board and staff will promote the District's state cost-share program, GBERBA cost-share programs, Flood Recovery funds and Clean Water Legacy Funds by utilizing personal contacts, the Conservation Update, newspaper and radio, informational tours and meetings.

The staff will carry out all parts of the above mentioned programs as directed by the District Board. Program and policy decisions will be undertaken by the Board and they will make all decisions on contract approvals and payments. Technical certification is required by a representative of the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service of a staff member of the District staff with Technical Approval Authority.

The District staff will work together with NRCS, BWSR and the South Central Technical Area personnel in survey, design layout and construction of conservation practices.

High Priority Erosion Problems

High priority erosion problems mean areas where erosion from wind or water is occurring equal to, or in excess of 2 X T tons per acres per years or is occurring on any area that exhibits active gully erosion or is identified as high priority in the Comprehensive Water Plan.

State cost-share funds will be used to install critical area stabilization, diversions, field windbreaks, grass waterways, waste management systems, riparian buffer strips, sediment retention, erosion or water control structures, stream bank stabilization, shore land and roadside protection and terraces.

Water erosion and wind erosion can occur in most parts of the District.

High Priority Water Quality Problems

"High priority water quality problems" mean areas where sediment, nutrient, chemicals, or other pollutants discharge to Department of Natural Resources designated protected waters or to any high priority waters as identified in the Martin County Comprehensive Water Plan, or discharge to a sinkhole or groundwater. The pollutant delivery rate to the water source is in amounts that will impair the quality of usefulness of the water resources.

Approximately 10,000 acres (2%) of Martin County are designated in the high priority sedimentation category. High priority sedimentation problems will be addressed county wide with priority given to the Impaired Waters. These impaired waters will be addressed when implementation plans and funding are provided.

MARTIN SWCD
2017 Adopted Budget

Revenues

Intergovernmental

County

County Allocation	92,000.00
WCA	17,556.00
Water Plan	23,242.00

State

BWSR General Services	18,908.00
BWSR Easement Services	9,640.00
BWSR Operational Funding	90,000.00
BWSR Buffer	35,000.00
Farmbill Tech. Position	27,000.00
BWSR - WRP/RIM Services	2,000.00
State Cost-Share	17,945.00
State Cost-Share - T & A	3,589.00
Weed Management Grant	8,000.00
Weed Management Grant - T & A	2,000.00
Clean Water Fund - Surface Water Treatment	80,000.00
Clean Water Fund - T & A	12,000.00
Clean Water Fund - Streambank Projects	30,000.00
Clean Water Fund - T & A	4,500.00
Clean Water Funds - Well Sealing	-
Clean Water Funds - T & A	-
DNR OB Wells	960.00
LCCMR	30,000.00
LCCMR - T & A	15,000.00
MDA Grant	-
MDA Grant - T & A	5,000.00
MPCA - E. Fork WRAPS	20,000.00
MPCA - T & A	15,000.00
Flood Funds	118,750.00
Flood T & A	18,000.00
Invasive Species	15,000.00
Invasive Species T & A	12,000.00
Misc.	-
Ag Certainty Program	6,000.00
GBERBA - T & A	2,000.00

Federal

NRCS Contribution Agreement	-
Total Intergovernmental Revenues	**$ 731,090.00**

Charges for Services

Tree Program		12,000.00
Seeder		6,000.00
Seed		5,000.00
Ag BMP Program		-
District Services		2,000.00
Total Charges for Services	**$**	**25,000.00**

Interest Earnings

Interest Earnings		1,200.00
Total Interest Earnings	**$**	**1,200.00**

Miscellaneous

Conservation Clubs		1,000.00
Other Misc. Income		-
Total Miscellaneous	**$**	**1,000.00**

Total Revenues	**$**	**758,290.00**

Expenditures

District Operations

Personal Services

Employee Salary		242,000.00
Medical Insurance		32,000.00
FICA		18,513.00
PERA		18,150.00
Unemployment Insurance		400.00
Supervisor Compensation		9,000.00
Total Personal Services	**$**	**320,063.00**

Services and Charges

Supervisor Expenses		5,000.00
Employee Expense & Training		2,000.00
Office Rent & Storage Rent		14,324.00
Postage-Tele-Comm.		4,500.00
Education & Promotion		3,500.00
Fees & Dues		8,000.00
MCIT Insurance		5,000.00
Vehicle Mtce.		2,000.00
Fuel		3,500.00
Field Equipment Mtce.		1,500.00
Misc.		2,000.00
Total Other Services and Charges	**$**	**51,324.00**

Supplies		
Office Supplies		2,000.00
Field Supplies		1,000.00
Total Supplies	**$**	**3,000.00**
Capital Outlay		
Vehicle Purchase		-
Field Equipment		5,000.00
Office Equipment		7,500.00
Total Capital Outlay	**$**	**12,500.00**
Total District Operations	**$**	**386,887.00**
Project Expenditures		
District		
Tree Program		8,000.00
Seeding Program		5,000.00
Water Plan Expense		2,000.00
State		
BWSR Operational Funding		10,000.00
Buffer		10,000.00
State Cost-Share		17,945.00
Weed Management Grant		8,000.00
Clean Water Fund - Surface Water Treatment		80,000.00
Clean Water Fund - Streambank		30,000.00
Clean Water Fund - Well Sealing		-
LCCMR Grant		30,000.00
MDA Grant		-
MPCA WRAPS		20,000.00
Flood Funds		118,750.00
Aquatic Invasive Species		15,000.00
GBERBA Projects		-
Federal		
Other		
Conservation Clubs		-
Misc. Project		10,000.00
Total Project expenditures	**$**	**364,695.00**
Total Expenditures	**$**	**751,582.00**