

Annual Plan of Work

Rock LMO/SWCD

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

I. INTRODUCTION

This plan is written to develop a guide for positive action concerning the use and protection of the natural resources located within the boundaries of Rock County.

II. ANNUAL OBJECTIVES

A. Comprehensive Local Water Plan

- Coordinate and facilitate a One Watershed One Plan for the Missouri River Watershed with partner SWCD's, Watershed Districts and County Environmental Offices in the watershed.
- Continue data collection pertinent to water quality and quantity in Rock County and assemble this information and data in a useable format.
- Provide Nitrate Testing of water at County Fair
- Use the Missouri River 1 Watershed/1 Plan & WRAPS Implementation Plan as a guideline in decision making processes.
- Assist Minnesota Geological Services with developing a County Geological Atlas
- Continue to work with the City of Luverne and Rock County Rural Water in their wellhead protection and watershed protection areas and pursue new technologies to determine priority areas within the DSWMA
- Assist with wellhead protection plan updates when needed
- Provide support of nitrogen management programs in vulnerable wellhead areas.
- Coordinate the Minnesota Department of Ag (MDA) efforts with the Groundwater Protection Rule Program
- Focus efforts to provide landowners in the mapped priority areas with information on programs to protect these areas.
- Coordinate our efforts and resources with MDA MDH, MPCA, DNR, BWSR, and U.S. Fish Wildlife partners.
- Utilize Missouri River 1 Watershed/1 Plan Work Group and Joint Powers Board to provide input and guidance on implementing the Missouri River1 Watershed/1 Plan Implementation Plans.
- Apply for and manage Clean Water Legacy Grants to fund BMP practices and incentives that correct TMDL streams listed as impaired.

B. Conservation

- Continue to utilize Terrain Analysis to identify Priority Management Zones (PMZ's) or high erosion areas.
- Provide technical assistance with field walkovers as well as design and installation of conservation practices.
- Promote and facilitate producer participation in the Minnesota Water Quality Certification Program
- Encourage mitigation of the effects of tile drainage water with controlled drainage structures and treatment systems.
- Continue to promote the State Cost-Share Program.
- Continue to support and promote the EQIP & CSP Program.

- Promote & improve the tree program through emphasis on energy savings, environmental/wildlife benefits, property enhancements, and snow reduction
- Promote the tree matting machine benefits of increased growth rates, lengthened growing season, and reduced site maintenance to consumers
- Promote Riparian Buffers and require buffers when water courses are maintained.
- Promote the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) by contacting landowners and processing applications.
- Promote stream bank stabilization on the Rock River to reduce sediment loading
- Promote rain gardens in the City of Luverne to address storm water runoff and reduce pollutant delivery to the Rock River.
- Continue to promote the abandoned well sealing program to reduce the contamination of water. Seal 12 abandoned wells.
- Provide technical assistance for conservation practices such as terraces, waterways and water and sediment control basins.
- Assist with installation of 2 Animal waste systems
 - Develop and/or facilitate a conservation credit and carbon credit initiative program.
 - Provide technical assistance for Ag BMP Loan funded conservation practices.
- Coordinate with the Technical Service Provider for engineering and technical assistance for all cost-share projects and Ag BMP Loan BMP's
- Provide a no-till drill to seed native grasses for CRP or native grass restoration as well as stream buffers.
- Collect samples at 6 permanent surface water sites, sampling and testing the waters in conjunction with the CLWP.
- Test water levels for the DNR in 6 observation wells in Rock County.
- Coordinate and promote conservation practices that will follow through with the Missouri River 1Watershed/1Plan Implementation Plan.
- Promote and assist with wetland replacement projects.
- Review potential wetland impact applications
 - Implement the State's Buffer Law and Soil Loss legislation by educating and providing technical assistance to affected landowners.
 - Promote soil health initiatives with cover crops, conservation tillage, and no-till.
 - Implement the MPCA Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) monitoring 11 surface water sites eleven times from May through September.

C. Geographic Information System

- Maintain and update E911 emergency service data.
- Continue to utilize GIS to enhance daily operations of the Land Management Office / SWCD
- Continue to be a clearinghouse for GIS data for the county
- Maintain and update parcel data layer
- Maintain a current and accurate data base for feedlot information as well as other GIS data.
- Provide GIS support for all county departments.
- Maintain and adopt an official Zoning Map
- Continue to obtain and utilize data through Government agencies
- Attend training at the annual GIS/LIS conference
- Update and enhance Rock County GIS to include non-ag and non-residential development, especially Wind Turbines and Telecommunication Towers
- Maintain and update online parcel mapping service
- Expand functionality of online mapping through Pictometry and other online services.
- Conduct a data compliance check on all parcels and address points
- Provide support for the next generation of E-911 Services

D. Education

- Participate and cooperate with SWMACDE 2022 Environmental Fair held at the Shetek Lutheran Ministries Center, Slayton, Minnesota
- Participate in The Farmer Magazine Conservation Cooperative Contest.
- Participate in the Rain Gauge monitoring program in SW Minnesota.
- HHW learning stations - 5th grade - 5 sessions
- Promote ISTS Education to public through newsletters, and public meetings.
- Promote well head protection through newsletters and public meetings.
- Sponsor 6 sessions with the Ecology Bus for 3rd grade students.
- Host open houses and informational meetings for the TMDL/WRAPS Implementation Plan
- Utilize our website for providing information on programs being offered.

E. Environmental

- Provide copies of the recycling solid waste guides that list the requirements for Rock County residents.
- Create a Wetland Brochure that highlights benefits of wetlands and how to enhance the areas.
- Maintain safety training - 16 hours.

F. Feedlots

- Maintain a Feedlot Database
- Assist producers with new construction of feedlots and conduct inspections as needed.
- Provide technical assistance to all producers in Rock County.
- Continue support to MPCA and MACFO Board.
- Provide technical assistance for Best Management Practices of manure management and whole farm planning.
- Maintain a Certified Crop Advisor license to provide a high level of technical assistance.
- Facilitate re-registration of all feedlots required to be registered
- Maintain GPS database on all active feedlots.
- Promote and assist producers in writing nutrient management plans for their operations.
- Assist area agronomists and crop consultants in providing nutrient management planning for producers choosing to contract for their service
- Provide engineering technical assistance to the producers of Rock County with the SWJPO
- Inspect 7% of all active feedlots in the County per MPCA feedlot work plan per year.
- Continue to assist producers in permitting new and expanding feedlots.
- Assist eligible producers in obtaining cost-share and low interest loans for feedlot corrections and manure management.

III. District Administrative Objective

Provide for an effective and efficient district operation by:

- 1) Hold regular monthly meetings.
- 2) Review annual plan of work, comprehensive plan, calendar of events and budget.
- 3) Review The Memorandums of Understandings.
- 4) Job descriptions, annual plan for work, and performance evaluations will be reviewed annually.
- 5) Training needs will be provided as needed and available.
- 6) District participates in the NACD, MASWCD, and Area V Association programs and pay dues.
- 7) Cooperate with NRCS in administering, training and supervising volunteers and assigning work for the Earth Team Volunteer program.
- 8) Receive computer training when needed.
- 9) Maintain card files by race and status for EEO.
- 10) Encourage Civil Rights training for SWCD board.

- 11) Work to improve NRCS/LMO/SWCD District Board and FSA goals and relations. DC/District Manager will work monthly to achieve this.
- 12) Work closely with NRCS to achieve maximum return on EQIP Funds.
- 13) Work closely with MASWCD & Lobbyist for Stabilize Funding.
- 14) Maintain EDP Review & update twice annually
- 15) Update FO files so as to ensure that the files are under the current owner and/or operators
- 16) Update LMO/SWCD, NRCS, and BWSR Memorandums Agreement

IV. Units of Government Objective

Maintain and increase involvement of the District in all levels of government by:

- 1) Cooperate in planning and conducting the Rock County Comprehensive Water Plan. Continue representation on the Local Water Planning Board and implement the water plan.
- 2) Wetland Conservation Act-provide assistance to the LGU by being on the WCA technical panel, attend training sessions as provided by BWSR. This includes possible wetland bank, and to provide and administer WCA on non ag land.
- 3) Attend as needed County Commissioner meetings to report on the budget, work programs and consult with them on other issues.
- 4) Conduct a conservation tour for Commissioners, agency heads and affiliate members annually.
- 5) Provide assistance and support to:
 - a) County on high priority feedlot problems and county planning and zoning (as defined under High Priority Feedlots). Assist all livestock producers with feedlot registration and technical support.
 - b) Work with MPCA on state sighted pollution problems.
 - c) Kanaranzi-Little Rock Watershed District in programs, promotion, public information, permit application and preparation of long-term contracts.
 - d) DNR on monitoring wells, reporting rain gauge observator's amounts, water permits, wildlife land acquisition and establishment, and also grain and forage sorghum plots.
 - e) Develop a local permanent new well record file.

V. Conduct the State Cost-Share Program in high priority areas of the county.

- 1) Funds will be offered on high priority critical area conservation practice applications.
- 2) Funds will be encumbered on projects that we feel assured the applications thereof will actually be installed and in a timely matter.
- 3) Administration will be accomplished by the Office Manager.
- 4) Publication of information on CRP, WCA and RIM will continue.
- 5) Promote Ag BMP Loan Program

VI. STAFFING NEED

A. Natural Resource Conservation Service--The County needs to maintain 2 full-time personnel in this office, a District Conservationist and a Conservation Technician. This is approximately their present division of time/labor:

	District Conservationist	Conservation Technician
Application (all practices)	.4 FTE years	.6 FTE years
Planning	.5 FTE years	.4 FTE years
P.R. & I.	<u>.1 FTE years</u>	<u>.0 FTE years</u>
	1.0 FTE years	1.0 man years

B. District-The County needs both a full-time District Manager and a full-time District Office Manager. The division of the labor force will be based on a 40-hour workweek:

District Manager:		District Office Manager	
Bookkeeping	5%	Bookkeeping	20%
I & E	10%	Clerical	10%
Planning	20%	Application	40%
Promoting & Implementing	25%	State Board Reports	10%
District Programs	35%	State Cost-Share Programs	15%
Miscellaneous	<u>5%</u>	Miscellaneous	<u>5%</u>
	100%		100%

VII. COST-SHARE REQUIREMENTS

A. High Priority Erosion Problems

"High priority erosion problems" means areas where erosion from wind or water is occurring on Class I-IV soils equal to or in excess of 2 x T tons per acre per year or any area within 300 feet of a water course or within 1,000 feet of a water basin or wetland eroding by water in excess of T tons per acre per year. The water basin, wetland, or watercourse must be classified by the Department of Natural Resources as protected water. Erosion problems occurring on non-shore land areas in excess of T but less than 2 x T tons per acre per year are classified as secondary priority.

The District has determined the areas of potential erosion in Rock County. The area with the greatest need; is greatly eroding in excess of 3T. This erosion from wind and/or water occurs for the most part in the southwestern and western part of the Rock County.

We plan to spend our 2020/2021/2022 state cost-share dollars and 2022 Local Capacity project dollars on qualified cost-share practices by our land users on high priority basis as we have in the past. We use 20% of the funds for administrative expenses and technical services to implement these projects. The division of cost-share money to be spent tentatively will be:

T & A Services	20%
Terraces/WASCB	40%
Grass Waterway	40%

In case of funding constraints, committed applicants will be given top priority.

B. High Priority Water Quality Problems.

"High priority water quality problems" means areas where sediment, nutrients, chemicals, or other pollutants discharge to DNR designated protected waters or to a sinkhole or ground water so as to impair their quality or usefulness, including high priority feedlots and sedimentation problems.

The upland areas that drain into streams and creeks in Beaver Creek township generally erode in excess of 3 T per acre. Many localized areas in the county exceed the 2 T per acre. Gravel outwash areas that are in close proximity to our major rivers and streams are highly susceptible to groundwater contamination. Provide information and technical assistance to land users to improve water quality by assisting them in the abatement of point and non-point pollution.

C. High Priority Sedimentation

"High priority sedimentation problems" means areas within 300 feet of a water course or 1,000 feet of a water basin or wetland where the water erosion rate exceeds 3 tons per acre per year or areas where the districts can show that sediment delivery occurs from a watershed or direct conveyance structure such as a storm sewer or paved outlet channel

discharging to these waters. The water basin, wetland, or watercourse must be classified by the Natural Resources as a protected water. Sedimentation problems not meeting these criteria are not eligible for cost-sharing assistance.

As stated in the Comprehensive Plan, only minor, isolated areas of high priority sedimentation may occur since there are no lakes in the county. These areas will be addressed as the need arises.

D. High Priority Feedlots

"High priority feedlots" means feedlots where the pollution potential rating from the MINNFARM model shows the feedlot does not meet regulatory compliance and which are discharging pollutants to Department of Natural Resources designated protected waters or to a sinkhole or shallow soils overlaying fractured or cavernous bedrock or within 200 feet of a water well.

In conjunction with CLWP, we will provide assistance and support to the County on high priority feedlot problems, permitting of feedlots and county planning and zoning. We will inventory, evaluate and assess the location and pollution potential of feedlots in close proximity to the Rural Water wells and the City of Luverne's well system. The out-wash gravel plains are the biggest potential hazard in Rock County. Maintain County feedlot inventory. We will assist producers in obtaining nutrient management plans for those feedlots that are required to keep a MMP and feedlots within the DWSMA areas.

Rock County is one of the seven counties that have the highest animal unit numbers per square mile in the state. It also has from 10 - 13 feedlots per township that are close enough to a stream that may create problems. We will continue to conduct and maintain a level 3 inventory.

MPCA and Rock County have issued 545 feedlot permits/registrations in the County Maintaining a continuing program of education to inform livestock managers of the need for permit and registration process to expand or develop new feeding operations. Feedlot wastes are an important part of a good fertilizer program and information on approved ways to dispose of animal wastes that will assist feeders in formalizing their own livestock waste management system.